

THE

LOVERS.

E H T

Entered in Stationers Hall as the Law directs,

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T H E
L O V E R S:

O R T H E
M E M O I R S

O F K.
Lady Sarah B—
A N D
The Countess P—.

Published by Mr. TREYSSAC DE VERGY, Counsellor in
the Parliament of PARIS.

Curse on all Laws but those which Love has made !

POPE.

L O N D O N :

Printed for the EDITOR, and sold by J. ROSON,
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Booksellers in Great Britain.

M DCC LXIX.

De Clergy 48

THE
LOVER'S

OR THE

MILITARY

CONTEST



Published by Mr. T. Agnew & Sons, 15, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

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[iv]

powers of nature and pride will
easily excuse the lovers, and
forgive me.

TO THE

C O U N T E S S

O F

H * R R * * * * * M O N.

M A D A M,

TO the woman of strong feel-
ings, exquisite judgment and
delicacy, not to the COUNTESS,
I pay a public homage.---Your
reason, which knows the forcible
powers

[vi]

powers of nature and pride, will
easily excuse the LOVERS, and
forgive me.

I am,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's

Most humble and

Obedient Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

you have a right to damn this book; mine
 to commend it as unquestionable. A la-
 zebus not fonder of his mistress than an
 editor of the work he publishes—in both
 partiality is justifiable—partial perverts
 no defects—widest knowledge none.

TO THE

PUBLIC.

WERE I not certain you are as jealous
 of the liberty of your minds, as that
 of your persons, I would command your
 judgment, and bid you to READ and be
 PLEASED. You hate to be dictated ; no
 more than you will I receive the law. If
 you

you have a right to damn this book, mine to commend it as unquestionable. A lover is not fonder of his mistress than an editor of the work he publishes—in both partiality is justifiable—passion perceives no defects—pride acknowledges none.

When I found the pocket-book which contained these Memoirs, curiosity, next to love the most prevailing passion in my heart, ordered an immediate perusal of them: I obeyed. “This is,” exclaimed I when I had read, “a most exquisite history of human feelings, a perfect panegyric of nature and reason.”—However charmed with the present, fortune had so unexpectedly favoured me with, I had the generosity

nerosity to advertise it, that the author might possess it again. His silence making it my property, I resolved on publishing it. Several letters being in part destroyed, and others absolutely illegible, I inserted the following card in all the daily papers

"Mr. Treysac de Vergy's compliments to the author of the LOVERS. Whatever his reasons may have been for not claiming the pocket-book, lost between Northumberland-house and Holland-house, he cannot be insensible of the honour he will necessarily receive from the publication of his masterly performance. Few, if any, in this age, have the same merit for wit, sentiment,

timent, and the unravelling of the human heart. Of the PASSIONS he has written with the pen of an OVID, of the FEELINGS with that of RICHARDSON. Was Mr. De Vergy to publish the work as he found it, a few letters from, &c. would be left imperfect, &c. this loss the public would feel. Mr. De Vergy begs the author would favour him with an hour's interview, and rely upon his honour and secrecy."

Whether the author is dead, or out of England, I know not ; but I received no answer. I was the more vexed not to hear from him, as I had racked my wits to find
a key

a key to the characters of the LOVERS,
and had not succeeded. Fictitious or
real, they are the strokes of a master.

TREYSSAC DE VERGY.

a key to the characters of the lovers,
and had not succeeded. Fictions or
real, they are the fibres of a matter.

TRÉVISA DE VERGÉ.

**THE
LOVERS.**

LETTER I.

Lady SARAH B—— to the Countess P——.

THE world say this—the world say
that “—right or wrong, Jenny,
the world will talk. Idle people’s
mighty business is to slander—this is their life—
Mine is to feel, and to be happy. Tell me no
more what fools say, those I despise, but what
the sensible, the passionate think of me—their

B

lan-

language is the only one I do and will understand,

They charge me with hypocrisy—with hypocrisy! of all accusations the most impertinent—Hypocrisy I never had in my passions and manners. My countenance ever spoke the feelings of my heart, and the woman of *nature* silenced the woman of *society*. Had I privately, like thee, indulged in my lover's arms, though really guilty, I had paraded in all the pride of innocence.—I have one vice less than thee—yet thou figur'est among the virtuous, when I rank with the profligate! Men—how stupid!—I envy thee not, Jenny—pleasure, not reputation do I value. Thou stealest thy enjoyments—I glory in mine. My soul will know no restraint; it will bravely start in my eye, colour my cheek, swell my breast, and enliven every motion at the sight of the man I love. Transports and discretion I cannot reconcile—a mediation between them is the work of indifference.—Oh, Jenny! love thou feelest not—thou hast wants—these thou satisfiest with the cold blood of a sharper, who talks of honour, and acts like a knave. At
die

the bewitching cup of delights thou drinkest in
the dark, and appearest only when sober—un-
generous creature! — but never was thy soul
fairly inebriated: I forgive thee. Hadst thou
my heart, thou wouldst have my imprudence.

Adieu.

H — H — 1769.

LET

B 2

LETTER II.

The Countess P— to Lady SARAH B—

LOVE is a disease thou art pestered with, dear Sarah; it preys upon thy whole frame; nor is one drop of thy blood free from it. Thou hast all its poison, and of necessity must yield to its malignity. Thy Jenny has not thy sensibility.—Passion warms not my head to a flame—never yet has my reason been tyrannised by a rapture—I can either see or think when I feel. Possibly thou art happier than I—but what I lose in ecstasy I gain in the esteem of the public,—Say not that esteem is a chimera; although undeserved I delight to possess it. Of two rogues, the most artful certainly enjoys his superiority.—This is my case with all the world.—I leer at their praises with my lovely captain: their error is an addition to our pleasures.

There

There are circumstances, I own, which will carry a soul beyond the limits of decency—these I never yet met with. I have, 'tis true, a dislike to my husband, but the man deserves more my pity than my anger. His impertinence is Nature's, and not his own. He was born to act in a puppet-show—in that insignificant part he might have excelled—but in that of man—heavens! how he performs it! Think of the dear illusions of the night which flatter us with enchanting raptures, and vanish at the first confusion of the senses—thy husband and mine are these illusions. Can these shades complain when we welcome reality! they will, dear Sarah, and, what is worse, the world will take their part, and talk, and talk—"let them talk."—Could I find in the transports of my lover the price of public dishonour, thy answer would be mine. Then, indeed—thee, whom I excuse and defend, I would imitate—but thee I am not.

Adieu.

N—H—

LET,

LETTER III.

Lady SARAH B—— to Lord WILLIAM G——

NEVER write thou art the cause of my disgrace: let not thy heart be oppressed with one minute of sorrow, and thy lovely eyes deadened by one tear on that account. Since thou lovest, thou art innocent.

Had I, dear William, sacrificed to thee only my virtue, what triumph couldst thou have boasted? thy victory over the virtue of a woman! poor indeed would thy conquest be. Hast not thou charms, wit, graces, and youth? What arms could virtue have opposed to thee? I know none—nature, spite of education, will admire, listen, gaze, and feel.

If

If not in one month, in three my virtue would have expired in thy arms. My defeat was as natural as the temptation—this thou perpetually feedest my soul with.—I saw thee, and my heart was thine.—When from an unusual panting of my bosom—the faltering of my tongue, the indiscreet languor of my eyes, conscious I would believe thee, thou stammeredst, with the delirious accent of desire, “I love “you”—My trouble instantly answered—“I “love you.” Thy joy increased my emotions—such a life was on thy lips, such a play in thy hands—we were alone—I sighed—would fly—fled not—soon thy transports—I thought no more—I was happy.

For the pleasures thou then enjoyedst, dear William, thank thyself and not me : thou alone, by forcing thy own desires into my heart, wast the creator of them.—Thy raptures I partook of—My generosity went no further.—What a generosity ! had not bliss, without it, deserted thy kisses, and vanished from thy touch ? thank me not for that generosity whose advantages were peculiarly my own.

My

My reputation, agreeably to the senseless notions of the world, is far a greater sacrifice than my virtue—it is therefore, dear William, the only one worthy of thee. I made it to the wishes of thy heart, and am pleased with the offering. Wert thou the man of my fancy, I might repent—I adore thee—my whole being is thine.—I left my husband and followed thee!—Him I hated—thee I loved—how natural my flight! accuse not thyself—I repent not.

H—H—

LETTER IV.

The Countess P—, to Lady SARAH B—.

I Will tell thee, Sarah, of a very grave quarrel between F— and me—thy last letter was the cause—read and laugh.

The captain had, as usual, stolen into my closet,] where, finding me not, he amused himself in examining my toilet. Thy letter lay under a patch-box: he saw, and immediately perused it.

“Oh! Jenny! love thou feelest not.”

With these words did my young man salute my ears when I appeared.

“Oh! William! thou art a great fool,” answered I, in taping my fan upon his shoulder, and
mimick-

[FO]

mimicking the tone of his voice.

“ This will not do Jenny.—

And he shook his head.

“ What will then?—

And, with a smile, offered my lips.

“ I know not. This cursed letter has put me
“ out of humour.—Why the duce didn't you
“ bury it at the bottom of your desk?—I hate
“ to be convinced you love me not.—

“ And you believe lady Sarah rather than my
“ transports?—

“ Nature may cause these—

“ Nature!—

And I blushed.

“ No 'tis love—love only.—

“ Your tongue grace the words—my heart adds
“ to their illusion—but your looks—these looks
“ are not those of love—you betray me, Jenny :
“ you love me not.—

And he shed a tear.

“ William doubts my sincerity?—

And

And I wiped his tear with a kiss.—He would, and would not thank me for that kiss.

“ So young, Jenny, and yet so false !

“ So young, William, and yet so suspicious !—

He smiled.—William’s smiles ever were the forerunners of bliss—this time I was deceived. He turned from me, and took the letter again. He read—“ Thou hast wants.”—I coloured, even to a panting of my bosom—got the letter from him, tore it to pieces, and sullenly sat on a sofa. I hated him for two minutes. From thee the expression is nothing—from him—I was really humbled, confounded.—“ Thou hast wants !” How did he dare—I bit my lips with anger, and swore—not against him, for at that instant he was at my feet. I frowned upon him—would not listen—he rose—took his hat—

“ My lady, your most humble servant.”—

“ My lady !”

I threw at him the nosegay I wore in my bosom.

“ My lady ! am I no more your Jenny ?”—

At

And

At my feet again.

"A fine woman cannot be wrong—"

Then, he—

"Hold, Sir,"—

I know not, Sarah, who first fell at a woman's feet, but surely that situation is favourable to lovers.

"Pray, Sir,—"

I said no more. The captain is but eighteen—what could I say? Nothing. I sighed, and forgave.

Adieu.

N—H—

LETTER V.

Lord WILLIAM G., to Lady SARAH B.

THOU hast a noble soul, Sarah: that soul I adored long before thy beauty had captivated my heart. Thy virtues every one knew, every one spoke of with all the enthusiasm of love, I heard the uncommon praises, and wished for thee.—Wit, sense, vivacity united to an exquisite form! Rapturous were my longings to see thee.—Each hour of the day my imagination realized the moment of our interview. Thou wast the ever pleasing object of my thoughts and dreams—I saw thee, talked with thee, was lost

in

in thee.—Thy presence enlivened my transports—
 I admired and adored. Then only, I valued a
 life I could consecrate to thee—dear Sarah, I
 owe thee more than my life—I owe thee my
 pleasures—their poignancy is only thine—no
 other woman can give it.—Oh! would that fate
 had ordered me for thy husband! the name
 only wouldst thou have known—the lover
 had for ever been before thee.—I know thee—
 and thou canst not be mine! Excruciating misery!
 not mine!—I'll think myself into madness.—
 For me, thou hast despised the opinion of the
 world—submitted to want—for me thou wearest
 the fetters of an odious slavery—and thou canst
 not be mine! Oh Sarah! fly to me, abandon
 the merciless wretches who cry to thee, “fol-
 low him not”—with mine thy happiness is
 centered—fly to thy lover—he is not rich,
 but he loves thee—thou art the sole treasure his
 heart dotes upon. Come to the hospitable cot-
 tage I have prepared for thee—my passion
 will enoble it—will diffuse all its illusions
 —will charm the dreary prospect: ever new,
 ever enchanting, it will brave the contempt of
 men,

men, and the terrors of indigence.—I will see
 thee—thou wilt smile—Oh! fly, fly—my arms
 are open to welcome thee.

C—Castle.

LETTER VI.

Lady SARAH B—— to the Countess P——.

I Had once, in the crowd of my admirers, a courtier the very picture of a devil. The man, so frightful was his figure, I could hardly speak to. Sir C—— took my dislike for artifice, hinted a fear of the embroidered monkey. “Good God!” cried I, “that man!” “~~are~~ you mad?” “I am not,” replied he, with an offensive grin—tell no body of it, Jenny, the monkey presently became a beau.—To the suspicion of my husband was he indebted for his metamorphosis, and had not my heart opposed the fancy, I know not, but—a monkey to have such a chance! how could I help it? am I not a woman?

Men

Men have ordered that the “woman who
 “has a NOBODY for her husband, and does not
 “prefer him to a lord WILLIAM, should be a
 “disgrace to her sex.”—Who among those po-
 lite and discreet legislators would prefer a de-
 formed wife to a beautiful mistress? None.
 Why then do the fools require from us what
 next to death they hate to perform? Put that
 question to them, they will laugh; so will I at
 their impertinent law.—This law is to women
 what an high flavoured ragout is to an epicure—
 an forbid by his physician to taste it—only a
 temptation to disobey.

Not virtue, Jenny, but envy declaims against
 us. Every woman, who says “Lady Sarah is
 “wrong,” would be me—every man lord Wil-
 liam. They all in their hearts acquit us—
 their hearts are the most impartial and unerring
 judges—to that tribunal only will I appeal.

My dear brother will remonstrate—I know
 as well as he what decorum commands, but
 my fond soul will fix only on the delights it
 has enjoyed—these are my life—dear, dear,
 C William!

William!—Jenny! he writes me to fly to
him—I would—I cannot—I am mi-
ferable.

Adieu.

H—H—

Tuesday.

LET-

LETTER VII.

—*The Countess P*——, to *Lady SARAH B*——.

HOW easily men are our fools, Sarah! the mighty lords! they are so full of their own wisdom, and yet how often does the most experienced become the dupe to an artful woman of twenty? There must surely be between us and them a veil which defies their sagacity and blinds their judgment. Is it beauty, wit, or some other unknown trick of nature in our favour?

Lord P—— entered this morning my dressing-room with the countenance of—an husband; This single word tells thee he was displeased, anxious and impertinent. An hundred times have I been assured by captain F——, that

a pretty woman, at her toilet, is a conqueror none can resist—as often at that time has he convinced me of my irresistible power. The situations happy for lovers are not very likely the same to husbands. Mine was as unmoved at the wanton display of my charms as the Chinese pagod on my chimney. His looks were here and there, and as insensible at the third cast as at the first. He talked but to censure—gazed but to offend.—It came into my head to inflame his frozen heart.

“My lord,” said I, with a very insinuating smile, “I will absolutely wear to-day an egret of your own choice. Which of these do you like the best?” and, with another smile, tended him the jewel box.

He took it, and with the provoking air of indifference walked to the window for a better light.

I arose: my handkerchief vanished from my bosom. I stepped to him—in my motion was the desire of pleasing.

“Well, my lord?—

And

And I amorously passed my left arm round his neck.

“ Which of these shall I wear?—

On my word, Sarah, I approached his lips. He received, but returned not the kiss, and looked about as if in need of a third person to favour his retreat, or help him against my caresses. His hand, however, advanced so high as my breast, and then—hardly one pressure—not one praise even from his lips.

“ My lord, sneered I, you grow too fond—
“ this hand—

“ You are right—people may come—

With a ah, ah, ah! I returned to the toilet.

My lord very gravely looked at his watch—

“ 'Tis later than I thought.—Adieu, madam.—

“ Adieu, my lord.—

“ Apropos, I had almost forgot what brought me here—

“ What is it?—

He walked pensive.

“ What brought you here, my lord?—

And

And I put a patch on.

“ Your indiscretions.——

And he adjusted, at a pier glass, a lock of his hair I had disordered—not without swearing, I believe, for the faces he made could not agree but with an oath.

“ My indiscretions !——

And I warbled——

Say little, foolish, flutt'ring thing, &c,

“ Madam !——

And he turned suddenly upon me.

“ Your behaviour is talked of—I have been told——

“ What ?——

He took the puff from my toilet and powdered his hair.

“ I have been told—Is that lock well ?——

“ It is, Sir.——

“ I have been told that captain F—— and you are very intimate—is it true ?——

Did he think, Sarah, I would say yes ? I smiled.

“ You

" You smile? ———

And a fierce look.

" No more of that man, my lord. ———

And I assumed my airs of dignity and carelessness.

" If his visits are troublesome, forbid them. ———

" He loves you not? ———

" One word more, and ———

" Be not angry, my lady—F—— is often
" with you. ———

" He is your friend—not mine.

And I finished the song of *Sweet Robin*.

So firm was my voice, so easy my behaviour,
that lord P—— blushed at his impertinence.

" I have done, my lady, my intention was not
" to offend. ———

And the coxcomb crept away.

He was not gone ten minutes before F——
came.—I told him—he told me—I know not
what we said.

Adieu.

N—— H——.

1769.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

Lady SARAH B—— to the Countess P——

MY sister R—— tells me of virtue—as well might she tell a bishop of his duty, or the ambitious of a retired life.—That woman, of all the passions, has but pride: ever cool, her senses are hardly moved by the transports of love.—She knows not what it is to feel, and she will tell me of virtue! How stupid the indifferent! they will argue an inflamed heart into a dislike of the pleasures it pants after.—Ridiculous!—Lady H—— will not conceive that we can love when reason says we must not—'tis so easy to conquer passion—what a language!

A most

A most wretched life do I live with these mechanical beings.—Oh William! when shall I be with thee! for thy cottage, and thy love, how readily would I forsake the sumptuous palace I inhabit! in thy transports all my desires are centered. I wish for no other riches than thy sighs, and thy expressions of tenderness—one “I love thee” from thy lips is preferable to all my sister’s splendor and fortune.—For thee alone my soul was created—it has no feelings but those thou gavest it—to thine it should for ever be united.

Jenny! my dear Jenny! loathsome is life without my William—In vain do they watch my steps, and set a guard upon me; I’ll fly—I must fly—or die. Love will not suffer two enamoured hearts to be thus parted—he will whisper me how to steal from hence into my lover’s arms.—Like a criminal to be perpetually attended!—the inhuman! why do they not at once deprive me of my existence—it would be a favour, a mercy I would heartily welcome.—Every day to pine away in fruitless hope—to be impatient of a good, and not possess it—is there

there in hell a punishment equal to this?—I love
—is this a crime? Nature, Nature! take my part
—'tis thyself thou hast to revenge!—each hour
I breathe is robbed from my life—I cannot live
and be absent from William. I eat, drink,
sleep, but cannot say “I love”—is that life?—
No; 'tis misery—hell itself.—My brother—what
a brother! unfeeling wretch!—he speaks of the
honour of his house—I love—I have no pati-
ence. I must—yes, I must and will be free.

H—H—

LET-

LETTER IX.

Lord WILLIAM G—— to Lady SARAH B——.

SARAH, Sarah! thou lovest me not, else
hadst thou before now fled from thy tyrants,
and come to my arms.—No longer hast thou
the spirit of the passion that raged in thy bosom
—my presence kept it alive—no danger then
had withstood thy love for me—thou wouldst
have conquered every obstacle, and defied death
itself, had it been between thee and me.—I am
absent—I am forgot—to thy family thou hast
surrendered thy generosity—thou listenest to
false honour—true honour tells thee to be just
—but thou lovest not; honour has lost its power
over thee. —

O Sarah!

O Sarah ! Is it me thou forsakest—me, who of all men knows thee the best—loves thee the most ?—For thee I was ungrateful, and pierced the soul of a friend with grief and despair—for thee I was the basest of mankind—and thou lovest me not !—my guilt, when happy with thy smiles, lay buried in my heart—thy hatred has awoken it—awoken it with all its horrors—I shudder at my perfidy, and sink into a detestation of myself.—I violated the sacred laws of hospitality—what a villain I have been ! the sight of men is torment—every eye upbraids me with my infamy—I am the scorn of all—I live !—I fear death—yet had the courage to be base ! No wonder thou lovest me not, since thou canst not esteem me.—The whole world will praise thy change—and respect thee for thy contempt of me.—O Sarah ! my heart bleeds—to feel the torturing suspense—to doubt thy love—to be so deservedly miserable as to inspire no pity—to have not one tear shed over my grave when I am no more ! Damnation is in the thought.—Sarah ! crimes may still be added to crimes—not one soul shall with impunity rejoice

joice in my agony—death will wait upon me
 wherever I go—my hand is ready to strike—
 none that keep thee from me shall avoid the mor-
 tal blow.—Thou lovest me not—say it not—
 fear to say it.—Sarah, Sarah ! I love—I rave—
 I am distracted.

G—C—.

LET-

LETTER X.

Lady SARAH E—— to the Countess P——.

AT last I am alone.—I may vent my thoughts, and freely curse the hour I was born, and the sensibility nature gave me.—What a scene ! my spirits are not yet recovered—I must breathe—my heart is oppressed—every limb shakes—I will call—Oh Jenny ! I am sick—I cannot write.

* * * * *

How happy those who neither love nor hate—whose passions yield readily to a momentary dislike, or the fear of shame ! if few are their pleasures, fewer still are their pains. Sorrow, exquisite

site misery, are for the sensible—they enjoy
 —but what do they not suffer! every impres-
 sion strikes their souls, when the former are
 scarcely affected by the most moving incidents.
 A word, an act of beneficence, may be death to
 the feeling, or force repentance into their hearts,
 —I have a whole hour, dear Jenny, hated
 lord William and myself—been a whole
 hour unhappy not to have it in my power to
 love Sir C—, or sacrifice my passion to his
 uncommon generosity—From me he deserves
 the utmost esteem and gratitude—but I love,
 I cannot be just.—Sir C—! how once I
 loved him! he was the man of my own choice
 —the man I preferred to all mankind. Virtue,
 sense, beauty, he possessed.—My hand I glo-
 ried to give him—every woman envied my
 happiness—that happiness was like a fine day
 —ending in a storm. He ceased to please
 —I hated him—I cannot help it.

* * * * *

As I was drinking my chocolate, lady
 H—'s waiting woman told me, that Sir
 C— was with her ladyship. A blush in-
 stantly

stantly coloured my cheek, and the cup I held dropped from my fingers. A tear would force its way——discretion kept it from my eye.—
 I waved the woman to be gone. Then Sir C——'s wrongs came crowding to my mind. I reflected on his good nature——then on my injustice——I felt a remorse. His behaviour, ever polite and respectful, even when conscious I deserved it not——no longer did I stop the trickling tear.—I was amazed at my deviation from virtue——at my open defiance with all the world——at the disgrace I had brought upon Sir C—, —my heart shrunk with horror.—I thought of lord William——I grew calm——in my love I soon found an excuse to my errors——I remained however sad and uneasy——Sir C—— so near me ! I am tender, Jenny, but not bold. The husband I have undeservedly offended I could not meet with a smiling countenance, and a brazen brow.—I wished I had died the minute I beheld him without love.—I could repent——but not change.—I loved still, though I said “ I am wrong.”

— * * * * *

In

In the midst of my reverie, Sir C— and lady H— entered the room.

I shrieked at his sight—hid my face from him, and turned to the door. He stepped between the door and me. Then taking me affectionately by the hand—

“Am I such a monster as to frighten you from me? When was not I your best friend? I did not come to reproach—but to—
“forgive.—

What a language, Jenny, from an injured husband! how I was humbled! the more generous his proceeding, the greater my shame and confusion.

“Your trouble, dear Sarah,

“Dear Sarah!” it went to my heart.

“Your trouble tells me you have yielded only to passion, not to caprice.—Passion is not vice
“—your soul is still virtuous—that blush convinces me it is—you feel—I may yet be
“happy.—

All this while I looked like a criminal awed by his conscience and the presence of his judge.

D

—Not

—Not one word I answered.—One sigh only assured him that I felt his behaviour.

“The judicious world, madam, is always indulgent for the errors of the heart: men and women are alike their slaves—indifference only can triumph over them. I know their power too well to charge with guilt the unfortunate who submit to it.—Dear Sarah, if the illusion which forced you from my house is vanished, come and grace it again with your presence.—

“Stop—your good nature misleads you.—I am unworthy of the favour you do me.—

“You are not, if you repent.—

“Would you brave the public?—

“In you and myself, not in the vain opinion of mankind do I seek—can I find happiness.—

“I will not repay, Sir C—, your generosity with a falsehood.—I love—take not to your bosom the woman who has betrayed
—you.

"you. I esteem, sincerely esteem you, but I
 "love—death or time only can erase the fatal
 "passion from my heart—your unhappiness
 "is torment to me—hate me, despise me, Sir
 "C—, forget I ever was yours.——

Sir C— took me in his arms as I dropped
 on my knee.

"So sensible of your fault, and yet—but
 "'tis not yours. 'tis nature's.——I must—and
 "will forgive.——

"Your goodness is cruelty. How criminal I
 "am!—— Oh Sir C—! your forgiveness makes
 "me miserable.——

Sir C— shed a tear—Jenny! that tear—
 I fell at his feet, and kissing the hand he ten-
 dered me——

"Out of pity kill me—that tear I cannot
 "bear.——

"What a heart I have lost!——

"Would it still were yours!——

"That wish is life to my tortured soul—Sarah!

"dear Sarah!——

And he fixed his lips on mine.—I avoided them not—nay amorously returned the salute.—Gratitude bid away to love.

“And you would love me?—

“Really I would—Love united to duty would make me the happiest of my sex.—

His eyes brightened with joy—he was then the very picture of the bridegroom my heart had chosen. My eyes were instantly tuned to his—Lady H—had stolen from the room.—

“Sarah! Sarah!—

His action answered the tenderness of his expression.—He was a man—lord William I forgot in his arms. Never more delicious were the pleasures I have enjoyed with my lover—my soul shared in every transport, and was lost in his bliss. For twenty minutes I had no thought but to please, but to make Sir C—perfectly happy. I returned words for words, caresses for caresses, and enlivened every rapture.

“Oh!

"Oh!" exclaimed Sir C——, panting on my bosom, "this is life —— the only life —— But my Sarah can give it. ——"

Then one transport, and he expired to live again the life he had praised. ——

Would the illusion had lasted —— I had continued to feel —— to feel only for Sir C —— ! but alas ! the sense of pleasure was hardly over than my heart ceased to be deluded. —— I saw —— I heard —— it was neither the features, nor the voice of lord William. I sighed, was vexed to the soul —— but could not, would not impose my indifference for love on the honest and generous Sir C —— . From the sincerity of my transports he had entertained the hope of my change —— soon he discovered he had hoped in vain.

"Deceive me, dear Sarah —— Your veracity my heart abhors. ——"

"Fatal passion," cried I, "wilt thou ever prevail over gratitude and justice ! —— My life would I presently give to see you happy —— rank and fortune would I sacrifice to virtue. —— She is in

" my

" my heart—but love is there too—I am a
" woman.—

He talked, flattered, bedewed my hands and
bosom with the sincerest tears man ever shed. |
—Not one word that could offend slipped from
his tongue—and I love him not!—how cruel
our fate!—Jenny, believe me: Sir C— is
miserable; I cannot be happy.

H— H—
Friday.

LET-
" I proudly give to see you happy—rank and
" fortune would I sacrifice to virtue—she is in
" my

LETTER XI.

The Countess P—— to Lady SARAH B——

I Thought, dear Sarah, that nothing could add to my esteem for thee—I knew thee not : thy heart is an honour to thy sex. They wonder at Sir C—'s extreme fondness for thee—were they, like he, acquainted with thy worth, quickly would their prejudices give way to love and admiration. Sir C—'s passion is his praise.—How ingenuous, feeling, and sincere my Sarah ! he, how indulgent, tender, and generous ! you were born for each other ; his claim to thy heart was thine to his.—Never was he
more

more worthy the name of a man than in his last behaviour with thee—thou, never more deserving his forgiveness. Such a husband—but thou lovest lord William.—I am vexed thou dost.—“ I am vexed I do,” sayest thou thyself. Who can hear thee and not pity, not shed a tear, not exclaim “ I forgive !” None but monsters—Sir C— is a man. Were it in thy power to conquer thy passion, I am convinced thou wouldst—it is not, thou art innocent.

Adieu.

N——— H——

Saturday Morning.

LET-

LETTER XII,

Lady SARAH B—— to Lord William G——

I Love thee not!" is it my William who thus writes to his Sarah, "thou lovest me not?" as well mightest thou have written I breathe without air, as to think I live without loving thee. Air, dear William, is the support, but love the only charm of my life. I wonder the insensible abhor not their existence. Every day the insipid repetition of the day before! not one hour enlivened by passion, taken up with the delirium of a feeling heart! is not that mere vegetation—a negative life? When I cease to
love,

love, William, thou wilt learn I am dead. Love is the want of my soul, and thou the sole object of it. All other passions glance on my heart. Pride itself, which ruled my former days, diverts me not from thee. Every sensation thou causest, every thought thou createst—I am thee, and not myself.

“ I love thee not ! ” how unjust ! for thee have not I made a wretch of a worthy husband, who not once stammered a *no* when a *yes* would please me ?—Never was my heart, dear William, dead to justice. Often has the idea of Sir C— chilled my blood in the midst of my enjoyments, stopped my transports at the very minute thou wast happy. In thy arms I have thought of his wrongs—forgive, dear William, but in thy arms, not always was I absolutely thine, —I am innocent since I love—however Gratitude will tell me of Sir C—’s misery—thou wouldst hate me, did not I answer her language with a tear.

Many attempts have I made to escape from H— h—. I have exerted all the powers of gold, false confidence, friendship, apparent
indif-

indifference—they know my heart is thine: this certainty is their arm against my seductions. To say “ I hate thee ”—never could I pronounce the words; my features would instantly bely them. To be free, I will not be false—this would be a crime; my love is not.

Lady H— is incessantly with me. She numbers my sighs, shrugs her shoulders at every beating of my heart, interprets every expression, and severely upbraids me with them all. She a woman, and my sister!—her youth is over—at that time she had felt for me, but now—William, dear William, I long for thee as much as thou dost for me—thy impatience is mine.— Since remorse keeps me not here, love will soon point my way to thy arms.

Adieu.

H— H—

LET-

LETTER XIII.

The Countess P—— to Lady SARAH B——.

WITHIN a hair's breadth was I this morning of being surpris'd by lord P—. Two minutes sooner, he had heard, he had seen what an husband ought neither to see nor hear.

Captain F—— was repeating his daily homage, and I accepting it with all the thoughtlessness of youth and desire, when the loud steps of my lord told us of his approach. Poor F——! I pitied him—how unwilling to retreat, to lose the advantages he had gain'd!—however, he arose, swore, and in a trice we were ready for the unexpected visit. My captain sat at five
paces

paces from me, with the Gazetteer in his hand, and I seemingly listening to him.

“What do these fools mean by their apprehensions?”—asked F——, just as his lordship enter’d the room.

“I am not a politician, Sir, put the question to my lord.——”

His lordship, after a few side glances on my dishabille and the captain’s countenance, observed it was a fine morning. Then walked to the glass, smiled upon himself, then, artfully enough to discompose me, bantered F—— on his perpetual whispers to lady M——ve.

“The world say you have her.——”

Here he simpered, and fixed his eyes upon me.

“Her partiality for you is no secret: Why have you kept it from me, captain?——”

Again, an inquisitive look at me——could guess nothing. From the attack, Sarah, I had foreseen his lordship’s expectation. I looked as if I had no ears. F——, with a smile, I understood

derstood, owned lady M—ve deserved his af-
fidity.

Then my lord's brow began to clear. He grew cheerful, and even impertinently fond of me. Had we been alone, he had, believe me, been less lavish of his caresses, for fear of an event which turns but seldom to his honour. F——, impatient of his wanton play, softly stole to the door.

“Don't go captain,” mutter'd the frighten'd lord.——

“Keep him not my lord,” whisper'd I, with a mischievous sneer. “Never did I see you so tender and pressing.”——

And I ventured a kiss.

The captain shut the door.

The loving lord shrunk immediately into the indifferent husband. “It was a fine day.”——“He could not stay.”——“Would take a ride to S—— House.”——I let him go.

F——, meeting no servant in the next room, turned to my wardrobe, and thence into my closet.

“ You

" You the lovely wife of that man !" exclaimed he, when his lordship had left me.

" You lady M—ve's lover !——

He closed my lips with a kiss.——

Adieu.

N—— H——

Monday, 2 o'Clock.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

Lady SARAH B_____ to the Countess P_____.

THEY will make me impatient of death—how impertinently witty!—What can the counsels of the indifferent avail the sensible? Did ever the spendthrift, by listening to the miser, or the ambitious to the wise, grow moderate and discreet? No, never could the cool voice of reason banish passion from their hearts. Will the lover be less tenacious of his rights than the thoughtless youth? Is not love the natural food of our souls?—"I love." Nature rejoices at the words—"I love."—My intoxication is her triumph.

With

With impunity, the conqueror may fill the earth with death and despair, a judge decree in favour of injustice, a paymaster plunder a nation—and a woman, a tender woman is forbid to love ! they all will doom her to infamy for a fault every one of them would have caused !— They call this an enlightened age ; in what does it differ from the times of extravagance, error, and folly ? A gamester, with one cast of the die, deprives his family of their daily bread—that man is suffered into society, nay supported by the very authors of his ruin.—Jenny ! How do they dare to condemn a fall I could not avoid, and forgive crimes thought of and committed in cool blood ! Oh ! the fools, the fools ! I could almost lay a hearty curse upon them.

H—H—

E

LET

LETTER XV.

Lord WILLIAM G—— to Lady SARAH B——

THOU hast, dear Sarah, revived my sinking soul—from the very brink of despair; thou hast called me back to pleasure. A loving word penned by thee has a charm sorrow cannot oppose—thy bewitching expressions, “I love thee,” all my senses thank thee for—thou hast restored them their life.

They tell me of diversions, I think of thee—of a new mistress, I think of thee—of the esteem of men, I think of thee. I scorn and forget all but thee. Thou possessest my heart
and

and head—no room is there in them but for love and my Sarah.

Every minute my eyes behold thy lovely picture—every minute I press it to my lips, and my imagination makes it talk, move, and smile as thou dost. The whole day I converse with it, at night it rests upon my heart, and gives my dreams all the enchantments of reality. I awake, seek for thee—"where art thou?" exclaim I, "where art thou, my "Sarah?"—I listen—then recollect and sink under my misery.

Never breathed a more faithful lover—never a more amiable and deserving mistress. Thou art all goodness, ingenuity, and virtue.—We are parted! unlucky the day in which I surrendered thee to thy sister! how cowardly prudent! I thy lover, and so readily I yielded thee! Oh Sarah! hate me not—I am severely punished. The loss of thee none can repair—that loss I bewail with torturing agony.—Thy fame I respected—I was wrong: the lover should not have been lost in the man of

honour—how dearly I pay for an act of justice!
—I'll detest virtue—that virtue was false which
bid me to leave thee.----such a self denial----
and I adored thee! Sarah, Sarah! hate me
not.

Adieu.

G—C—.

LET.

LETTER XVI.

Lady SARAH B—— to Lord WILLIAM G——.

OF all the tender women whose hearts were totally devoted to love, none had my feelings, none were so exquisitely miserable. I think, but to be tormented—love, but to detest myself. My soul is oppressed with the insufferable anguish of remorse—yet is delighted—yet will not be free.—The censure of mankind I despise; but religion, my oath, my husband—all these have a power—such a power—Oh! William, William! thou knowest my sensibility, I am the most wretched of my sex.

Imagination, which extenuates every fault, dreams every care away by fixing our souls upon

upon delightful scenes of joy, cannot delude me—it paints things as they are, not as I wish them to be—in its ramblings I am ever myself—not ten minutes am I lost in the thoughts of thee. The presence of a virtuous woman tells me of my crime—to speak, my relations need not; their looks, their silence, are much more eloquent, and expressive.— Their hope of a better behaviour—the name of Sir C—— are a dagger to my heart. William! would I had never been born! life under such a load cannot be supported—I must die since I cannot love thee. I cannot love thee! is it Sarah who has written “She cannot love thee?”—I can, I will, though all the horrors of misery and death should stand before me—I will love thee, dear William,—forgive; never will I suffer myself to be reasoned into virtue—my heart alone shall dictate, and I will obey.

H—— H——.

LET.

LETTER XVII.

The Countess P—— to Captain F——.

OFTEN, from your attempts to be witty, have I foreseen your passion would not last: often have I privately shed many tears over your volatility—yet, when did not I charge your age only with the levity of your heart? I would be deceived, and accused you not—the veil between us is at last torn off; I see you as you are. In vain do I seek for the lover, I constantly find the unprincipled young man of fashion. Under these colours does F—— appear, he whose ingenuity was my delight, and the spring of my tenderness for him. What a change! F——, the most eloquent of men when silent, or passionate, will talk—and how will

will he talk ! like him who has no feelings, he will chatter words to the enamoured Jenny— words ! what need have I of words ?—thy hand in mine, thy eyes upon me, thy sighs, thy confusion, thy pantings, are the expressions my fond heart expects from thee. My William, formerly so expressive, now so languid and unmeaning !—thy love was fiery, ardent—like a meteor it blazed and vanished on a sudden.— Thus, I love not : my soul is struck to a delirium—thine can reason, think of another bliss, wish for transports with another beauty.—Oh William ! I fear all my sex. Not this, or that woman, but all who can charm and enjoy are my rivals. Thy heart is opened to variety—thy youth eager after pleasures—no delicacy, no reflection can there be in thy choice. At our last numerous rout every woman had thy praise, thy smiles, and thy sighs.—Lavish of deceit thy looks and whispers told them alternately of thy desires.—When last night I amorously complained, others attracted thy homage, thou wast witty, cool, insensible of my fears. In my arms the name of lady M—ve escaped from
thy

thy lips! her, on my bosom, thy imagination enjoyed—boldly inconstant at the very minute our souls united—perfidious wretch! I smothered my anger, nay once fancied thy heart had no share in the slip of thy tongue—not one word from me didst thou hear against thee—one sigh only betrayed the inward indignation, and as instantly expired in thy transports.

—You knew your guilt and my generosity, yet made no apology, no attempt to undeceive me. Am I grown so indifferent to F—— that he trifles with my happiness, and will not secure it at the small price of a falsehood? If art was ever a virtue, it is when it may free a sincere lover from grief or despair—so much is daily employed to make women miserable, why spare it when it can make them happy! man! how unjust and cruel!—

N—H—

Sunday morning.

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

Captain F—— to the Countess P——.

JENNY offends, yet will complain! How false and daring! was the last kiss I gave thee yesterday return'd? though as pressing, and passionate as at the first minute of our mutual joys, wast not thou cold, absent, almost motionless in my arms? I said, "thy feelings are not mine." Thy answer was a smile. A smile for transports! from thee to me, such a language, Jenny!——did not you dress, with a studied care and elegance, make sentiment with wit, and give your looks the inviting vivacity of a coquet? did not every feature speak a want of pleasing, and your desire of being alone, the visit of an happier man? It was

was but eight, yet your watch twice told nine, and as often, in your impatience, did you point to the door. You said not expressly, "Begone," but it was written in every motion. That behaviour confounded me. I thought I did not see and hear with my own organs,—that some sudden, unknown distemper made me blind, deaf, and represented things in their very reverse. My Jenny, ever complaisant, caressing, changed into a proud insensible woman! How could I know her? Never before had she assumed such a character—'twas new, absolutely new to my eye and ear.

"In your arms I named lady M——ve!" charge me not with a guilt I am innocent of. Hate me, but impeach not my veracity. Have not I repeatedly sworn my love to you alone. Diffimulation I abhor—as sincerely would I have owned my dislike or hatred. My heart felt but for thee, how could I think of lady M——ve? "in thy arms!" thy accusation is not to be born—though a jest, it is death to my soul. I love thee—thee only I love. Civil to all women, I am tender but for my Jenny.
—You

You question my honour, no longer am I
esteemed: You write of an imaginary crime,
no longer am I loved—your injustice betrays
your indifference.—Another man—confusi-
on! I will not think it possible—no, my
Jenny cannot be false.—Although a woman of
rank she is delicate and generous. F—— is
still the man she loves. Never say, never write
“I love thee not.” My passion for Jenny, is my
supreme happiness—I wish for no other.

Adieu.

Sunday Noon.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

The Countess P—— to Lady SARAH B——.

FIVE times in three days has lord P—— complimented me with the language of friendship, though as often has he put on the looks of hatred. I am certain the man thinks the reverse of what he talks. He suspects, but has no proofs ; and these he expects from my carelessness, and his seeming dependence on my virtue. Such discretion in a fool ! how pliant—what a master of his passions—it must be a borrowed quality, a part he has been

been advised to perform, — A child, however, led by the string makes a false step; lord P—— like that child will fail in his attempt.

F—— has too much passion to have any art. His partiality speaks the choice of his heart. On his features sit triumphant love: his eyes tell his desires, and his tongue is perpetually warbling or whispering them. He sings my favourite tunes, betts on my game, commends my taste, consults my fancy for his dress, and damns or supports the opinion I attack or defend. The presence of lord P—— is hardly a rein to his careffes. Does his lordship turn the head, he steals a kiss, or says, “would we were alone!” if I look, “be discreet,” he smiles “I cannot.” Many times have I been nigh falling a victim to his thoughtlessness. A door, be it shut or open, is alike to him. He sees but me, thinks but of the pleasures he is going to enjoy. “That door,” exclaim I half out of my wits, “that door!” he hears me not, but strains me more closely to his bosom, and drowns my fears in his transports. As my counsels avail not, I
have

have accused him of perfidy, and forbid him
my private closet—he is innocent! no mat-
ter. He shall obey, or take his leave of
me.

N—H—

Sunday 6 o'clock.

LET-

LETTER XX.

Lady SARAH B—— to the Countess P——.

WITH gold, promises, and flattery I have at last made mine the female ARGUS, to whose guard I was committed. Her virtue would have resisted better, had not I shown her the picture of lord William. At that sight her features lost their savageness.

“He is very handsome,” cried she with a look of concern. “’Tis pity he is not your husband——with such a man you could not have thought of another——what eyes!——Has he really these lips?——

“He

" He has."——

" Good God ! how blooming and healthy
" these cheeks !——Did not the painter flatter,
" my lady ?——

" He did not."——

" Charming creature !——no wonder you
" should love him.——

And the woman sighed.

" Am I not innocent in your opinion, Mrs.
" B—— ?——

" Indeed——indeed——

And she paused.

" I am. Is it not this you would say ?——

" No body hears me ; so I will——

Another pause.

" I will declare, that if lord William is the
" reality of this picture, your love for him is
" justifiable——no woman, however, will pro-
" nounce against you.——

—She gave me the picture back, and as instant-
ly asked it again.——

F

" Mercy

"Mercy on me! it looks as if he talk'd—

"Does his lordship talk well?—

"And without waiting for my answer—

"Would my word to lady H—— were not a

"duty I am bound to observe!—

"Nature, who made you so sensible, Mrs.

"B——, made you equally generous. Your

"heart feels for my situation——that feeling

"is a real duty; the other is fictitious.—Were

"you in my place, would you have me oppose

"your happiness?—

"No, no. I would die if you did.—

And the honest Mrs. B—— shed a tear.

"'Tis in your power, dear madam, to make

"happy two lovers who, though absent, breathe

"but for each other.—Have you never lov-

"ed?—

"I have.—

And one sigh.

"Then, I shall be free.—Since you have

"loved, you must be humane and generous.

"——The indifferent only know not pity.—

"Your

"Your words—this picture will, I fear, fe-
 "duce me out of my duty.—take it back—
 "speak no more.——"

"If you neither listen, nor look at this,
 "what will speak in my favour?——"

"My heart, my lady, which suffers for your
 "distress. To this, not to your gold, trust
 "your liberty.——No longer will I see you a
 "prey to sorrow——you shall see lord Wil-
 "liam.——"

"Good Mrs. B——"

"I am a woman, my lady.——Your
 "troubles are my own: 'tis myself I serve in
 "giving you to your lover.——No thanks
 "——let us contrive what must be done.——"

Jenny! my soul dilated with inexpressible
 joy, "I'll see you again, dear William," ex-
 claimed I, with the indiscreet voice of plea-
 sure.——"

"Be more prudent, my lady, or happiness
 "will fly from you. Give this day to reason
 "——reserve your transports for happier
 "hours.——"

Then putting our heads together, we fancied every disguise the most able to screen me from private notice.

“ I think of none more to the purpose,” said Mrs. B——, “ than that of a clergyman. “ Though his heart has your feelings, the apparent sanctity of his carriage will favour “ your escape. Hypocrisy is the best mask.—

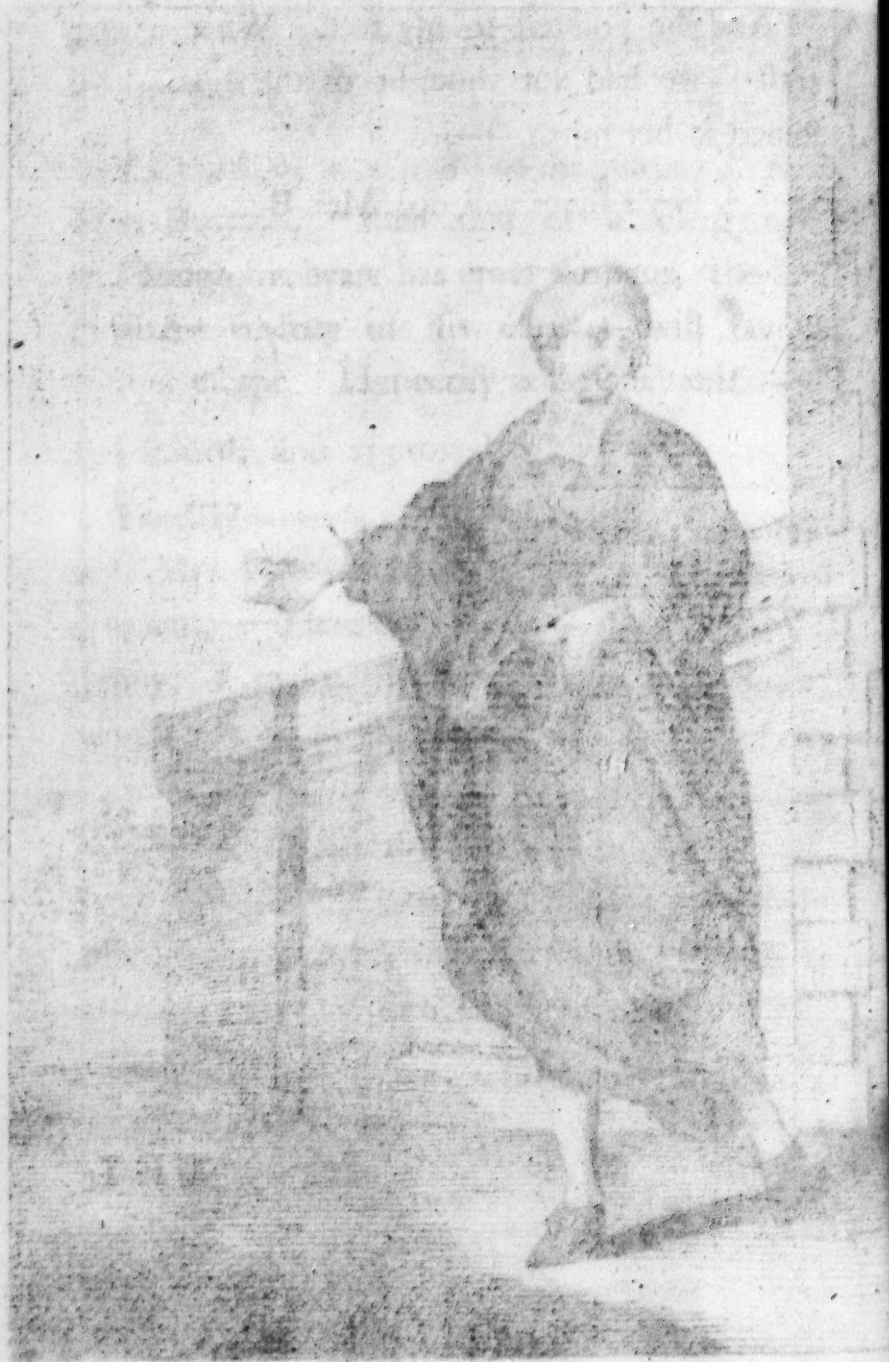
I smiled, and approved of the dress.

Lord H——’s chaplain being in the country, Mrs. B—— is gone to steal the sacred garment.—Here she is.—What a figure, Jenny, I make under the reverend cloak! would you could see me! the wig—the cassock—the band—quite ready for the pulpit.—I have studied my attitudes at the glass—lady H—— just gone abroad—I must fally out—poor me! how I tremble!—Mrs. B—— bursting into laughter!

“ Your blue silver embroidered shoe, madam.—

And





And she pointed to my feet. What a contrast ! we had not thought of the shoe—I joined in her mirth,—

“ A boy’s shoes will do, Mrs. B—

She is gone for them—heavens protect me in my flight !—Now I am ready.—Adieu : soon thou shalt hear from me.

H—H—

Monday 1 o’clock.

LET:

And she pointed to my feet. What a con-
trast! we had not thought of the shoe—I
joined in her mirth.—

“A boy’s shoes will do, Mrs. B.—

She is gone for them—heavens protect me
in my flight!—Now I am ready.—Adieu:
soon thou shalt hear from me.

LETTER XXI.

Lord William G—— to Lady Sarah B——.

NO — not one hour more will I trust my
happiness to fortune and thee. From this
minute, on myself alone I depend for thy pos-
session. Thy soul is too timorous; mine will
bravely think of daggers, and my hand without
hesitation execute its commands. Thy prison I
will enter with despair and death—I’ll free thee,
or I shall live no more. I am on the rack till
I see thee.

Aberdeen.

LET-

and intricate life to my tortured spirit—
 long have I existed—the fear of future good
 my hand—cowardice and ignorance make me
 shudder at the thought of annihilation—I look
 under my fate—I have no strength, no con-
 rage to brave it.

LETTER XXII.

Lady Sarah B—— to the Countess P——.

FROM too much sensibility my heart feels
 no more: it is overstruck with emotions;
 dead under the load of life. — Hope does some-
 times prevail; oftener does despair give the im-
 pulse — not one three minutes constant heave!
 my soul is delirious — what I speak, write, or am
 to resolve, I know not. O love! enchanting, un-
 happy passion—thou art by turns my heaven and
 and my hell! I know thee a poison, yet will not
 remove thee from my heart.—Friendship
 and virtue cannot quench the fire of my bosom,
 and

and ingratiate life to my tortured spirits——too long have I existed——the fear of futurity stops my hand——cowardice and ignorance make me shudder at the thought of annihilation.——I sink under my fate——I have no strength, no courage to brave it.

* * * * *

Hardly had I tasted the delights of liberty when I was a slave again.——'Tis a curse to be but a half criminal, not to have it in our power to face infamy.——Had I been entirely lost to modesty, remorse would not have betrayed me back into captivity—I would have been free, and supremely happy. O virtue, either neglected or adored, thou art a torment!

* * * * *

Little did I think, dear Jenny, I should ever write to thee from H—— h—. From that prison I escaped unperceived. Though I passed through a crowd of servants, none saw lady Sarah in the minister's cloaths.

I threw myself into the first hackney I met in Piccadilly, and bid the coachman drive to a tradesman's

tradesman's in the city, in whom I could repose the greatest confidence. There I intended to leave the sacred gown, and, with the name, habit, and character of an officer, to set off immediately for Scotland.

I thought myself already in the arms of lord William—his surprise, his joy, his feelings I enjoyed.——I was absorbed in the bewitching reverie, when, at the turning of St. Paul's church-yard the coach stopped on a sudden. Some confusion prevented the two ranges of carriages to and from the city—impatient of delay I ventured my head out of the coach, and thoughtlessly looked here and there, and even several times loudly spoke to the coachman. I had not been thus five minutes indiscreetly busy before the door flew open, and—Jenny! no less than my husband in the coach with me. *Medusa's* head was not so terrible to its beholders as that man to me. They were changed into insensible stones, I into a feeling stupidity. I neither shriek'd nor talked, but I saw Sir C——, and felt all the misery of my situation. Excessive
grief

grief brought at last tears down my cheek. I covered my eyes with my right hand, and with the left bid him to go. He ordered the coach to Piccadilly.

“Distraction be thy lot, merciless wretch!” Exclaimed I with fury; and I pushed the door with the greatest violence. He stopped my arm, and pulled the blind up.

“Would a man of honour force a woman’s inclinations when convinced of her hatred for him? Such a behaviour deserves the contempt of all the world.—Free my arms, thou the basest of men, or my cries will this minute call the people to my assistance.”

Then struggling vehemently I broke the blind open, and with increased fury covered his face and mine with our blood.—An heavy shower dispersing those who could hear, my resistance availed nothing.

The fellow durst to complain, to remonstrate—
—I shut my ears—

“Villain, villain!”

That

That word only did he hear from me. I searched for a penknife I constantly wear, to plunge it in his breast, then in my own. He saw the knife, understood my intention, and opposed it not but by offering his naked bosom to my revenge.

“Thy death would be an act of pity which I will not grant—in mine thou shalt be unhappy.”

And I turned the knife to my own heart. I had struck, but for his instantly seizing my hand, and snatching the deadly weapon from it. I opposed the attempt, and was slightly wounded.

—To their height my spirits had arose—on the feeling of my wound they fell—I fainted, and, when recovering, found myself with two unknown women in an unknown room.

* * * * *

The first thought which my tongue, obedient to the dictates of my heart, faithfully expressed, was a curse against the light I saw again, and the odious monster who had deprived me of lord William. At this unexpected fall of my

A

angry

angry soul the women looked at one another with despondency in their air.

“Where am I?—who are you?—”

And I cast the wild look of despair on the scene before me.

No answer—

Every limb shook with horror—I fancied myself in the regions of the dead—my sight grew confused—I mistook the women for phantoms, and the room for an extensive field. I thought I heard the lamentations of the unhappy who suffer for having lived—the heavenly passion of love, branded with contempt and infamy.—I flew not to see, not to hear—I met the husband I abhor—I flew still faster—like a fury he pursued and threatened me.

“Is there then no rest after death!” cried I with the accent of agony.

And I fell down bedewed with tears.

* * * * *

A sobbing reached my ear—I was comforted.

“A

“ A friendly sympathetic soul,” said I aloud,
 “ shares in my grief.——Here they feel pity,
 “ whilst above inhumanity rages in every bosom.
 “ None, amongst you, gentle shades, will call
 “ crime the most pressing and delightful
 “ want of nature !——I loved—I gave not my
 “ heart its feelings—Could I be guilty ?—

A hand was tendered me with one sigh that
 could not be suppressed.

“ Whose hand is this?——

And I pressed it in mine.

“ A friend’s——

“ Whoever thou art prostitute not that sacred
 “ name. In the world it means a deceiver the
 “ more dangerous as he is not suspected.——Be-
 “ tray me not.——

“ We all love and pity you—rise, dear ma-
 “ dam — open your eyes——

“ No, no. The shade of my husband is
 “ frightful to behold—let me be for ever blind.—

“ You are both alive, in London, in a friend’s
 “ house ——

“ What

“What do I hear!—Oh! tell me not that
 “I live,—you give me back to my misery again.
 “—Find milder torments for a soul innocently
 “criminal—spare, spare,—tell me not I live.—

“Dare to look, madam; no shade, no huf-
 “band is before you. I am Sir E—— W——

At the voice of my doctor I ventured a side
 glance. A young woman sat by me on the
 floor. Her arm was round my neck, and her
 handkerchief up to her eye. Her breast rose
 and fell with the quick repeated heave of con-
 cern.

“How generous these tears!—how kind these
 “pantings!

And I pressed her to my bosom.

“Dear, my lady——

She said no more. They all immediately
 helped me to an elbow chair.

* * * * *

Soon a cordial, and the soothing discourses
 of the ladies restored to my senses their usual
 coolness and activity. I talked without distrac-
 tion, and heard of Sir C—— without impati-
 ence,

ence; not that my heart, Jenny, was less a prey to hatred and despair, I felt all their poignancy; but I thought it prudent to be false.

“ This vice, the characteristic of the base or timorous souls, said I to myself, I ever despised—yet I must—I sighed at the necessity. —Nature! forgive if I renounce thee. For once let me side with art, thy enemy—the rest of my life shall be devoted to thee.—The crime is man’s and not my own.

* * * * *

The ladies begg’d I would be lady Sarah again: I complied. The young woman did the honours of her taste and toilet. I was not quite dressed when lady H— was introduced.

For a few minutes her ladyship indulged her spleen in an impertinent silence, then in a disdainful cast of her eyes at me. Severe was her brow—severer still her expression.

“ Thanks to Sir C——’s discretion and humanity, your folly, madam, is unknown.—
“ Abandoned wretch!

Here she bit her lips, and stamp’d with her foot.

“ Would,”

“ Would,” as my brother said once, “ that
 “ you had these three years been drown’d ! the
 “ indulgence of your husband is downright
 “ madness.—Such noble blood in your veins,
 “ and no virtue in your heart !——

“ My lady,” answered I, with an insulting
 composure in my air, “ when you married Mr.
 “ F——, did not you forfeit your virtue by
 “ disobeying the commands of a father ? Is a
 “ daughter’s duty less sacred than that of a wife ?
 “ Had you youth, beauty, and my heart, would
 “ you, in my situation, listen to scruples you so
 “ easily silence to satisfy not a passion, but a
 “ caprice ?

The proud lady H—— muttered a curse,
 waved her hand with contempt, and left the room.
 A few minutes after lady W—— brought me
 the following letter from Sir C——.

* * * * *

To Lady SARAH B_____.

COULD words speak daggers as remorse,
 or, like a pencil, show a heart's real feelings,
 I would refrain to write, lest the sensible, ge-
 nerous soul of lady Sarah should be too fiercely
 affected with my sorrow. The woman I love
 must not know the full extent of my misery—
 how could she help being unhappy! Passion
 leaves sometimes a cool hour to reason; one
 thought at that hour, on the wretch you have
 made, would be a pain too exquisite, not to be
 followed instantly by death, or despair.

I am not loved—'tis not your fault—I forgive.
 You hate me—I was not prepared against your
 hatred. Hatred supposes offence—Have I ever
 offended? Has not every minute of my life told
 my love? At what time had I a desire which
 was not yours—a pleasure which you did not
 give? My tongue spoke but to please—my heart
 felt only to adore—at its heaves, all knew whe-
 ther you had smil'd or frown'd—yet I am hated!

G

I have

I have critically examined every action of every day, and I have said, I never offended. What is my crime? Name it, and my death will expiate for it—to live I deserve not, if Sarah says I have offended.—I am hated—unjust Sarah! would you think—no—think not: forget all but thy love, or of all human beings thou shalt be the most wretched. Couldst thou know thyself, and do me justice, without the most torturing vexation? Oh! think not—add not thy grief to my despair—it would be more than thy husband could bear.

Would that thy heart had this morning been less refined in its revenge, that my death had appeared to thee a satisfactory compensation for thy disappointment! Life without thee is a perpetual torment, keener than thought to the guilty, want to the hungry, or disgrace to the ambitious.—Make me less sensible of thy loss by daily telling me the murdering history of thy amours—not so suddenly leave me to myself—compel me first to hate thee,—then be free and happy. Thy flight, far from opposing, I will
connive

connive at, I will help thee to. As eager for thy absence as I now long for thy sight, thou shalt, with my consent, range over all the world, open thy arms to all mankind, and load them all with delights.—Wait till my soul no longer pants after thee, till the spring of desire be exhausted—till I can breathe and rejoice at my liberty.—Sarah! be not ungenerous: fully not thy soul with a vice thou never knewest—be great in thy fall: have a virtue to plead for the esteem and forgiveness of thy friends and foes.

Thy escape is not suspected even by thy attendants: none but Mrs. B—— is acquainted with it, and her honesty answers for her discretion. The voice of slander shall not proclaim our mutual folly—dear Sarah! on my knee I beg you will follow lady W——, who will, unknown to all, bring you back to H—— h——. —Your happiness centers in yourself—force your own hatred into my heart, and never shall you complain of the unfortunate husband.

C—— B——

How noble the soul of that man, cried I, when I had read the letter! and for five minutes I gave way to a reverie on the stile, feelings, and behaviour of Sir C——. What I should do I endeavoured to fix, but lord William intruded in every thought, and destroyed every resolve. I made a new attempt, and spite of love I determined for virtue.

“I will be just,” exclaimed I, with the transports of a conqueror who gains an unexpected victory, “Sir C——, I will be just. I will listen to thee—please me if yet in thy power. —If not, death,—or lord William;—no medium—I must die or love.——”

At one this morning I arrived here—all still and quiet—not one servant in the way. At the sight of my room my heart failed—I cursed virtue. How imprudent I have been! from lady W—— I might have effected my escape—the thought I could not bear. I took, across the room, the distracted strides of madness, and talked the language of despair. Two hours was I
dead

dead to comfort—two hours insensible but of my misery.—Mrs. B—— promised her help in vain—I heard not.—Sleep surpris'd me at last, in the midst of tears and complaints.—I awoke—Adieu, Jenny, or I will blaspheme.

H—— H——.

LET-

LETTER XXIII.

The Countess P—— to Lady SARAH B——.

UNLUCKY be the day and hour when thy heart was opposed in its most eager desire, and thy generosity compelled thee to be thy own murderer! let no lover on that day ever boast his triumph over a lovely maid, or the courtier the superiority of art over his prince's ingenuity! cursed be that day and hour by the remotest posterity!

Sarah! thou deservest all the pity a noble soul can feel.—I know none more wretched, yet worthier of a better fate than thee.—I suffer—so will all who shall hear of thee—the most hardened

hardened heart will melt into tendernefs, and give a tear to thy misfortunes. I fee thee back in thy room under the fway of love and despair—how unhappy, thou the lovelieft of women ! Had Sir C—— beheld thee, his paffion would have yielded to thy sorrow, his honour dwindled into concern—he would have relented, and facrificed his peace to thy happinefs.—My heart is too full—I muft fee thee.—In a few hours I will mix my tears with thine.

N——— H——

LET

LETTER XXIV.

Lady SARAH B—— to Sir C—— B——.

MANY of those “cool hours passion leaves
“sometimes to reason,” I have had, yet
was I never convinced you had a right to com-
plain. My natural sensibility for the unhappy
has alone made me miserable—your own wrongs
were such a chimera as to deserve rather my con-
tempt than my pity. From my concern in your
sufferings, you concluded I thought myself guilt-
ty—that, did not I feel a remorse, I would be
less generous. As you delighted in that error,
I would not undeceive you. Your passion for
me was as violent as sincere; it was to be sooth-
ed

ed into a calm lest its fury had endangered your life—I had the humanity not to be true. Had I spoke—had you coolly listened, soon would you have acknowledged that my behaviour was in character, and the only one you could have expected from me.

Long before I knew you, I loved.—My virgin heart had surrendered to the most amiable of men.—Him, not his rank, I adored.—Despotic reasons of state took him from me—I outlived the fatal stroke, but the wound was ever the same—it continued to bleed—every day was a day of sorrow, every thought a torment, every dream still a keener sensation of my misery. The lovely youth of the court came in throngs to steal my feelings for my r—lover. Their attempts rooted him the deeper in my heart—there *Augustus* kept his sway, and reigned alone. My hopes to be happy in his arms having vanished, from my consciousness of his virtue, my spirits sunk, my health grew desperate, I wished but for death. Dissipation was ordered: I launched into the world, was of every party, went to all the places of public

lic resort—the faint image of pleasure followed me every where—not my senses, but my heart needed to be diverted, and this none but *Augustus* could affect. I saw you, mistook my want of a new attachment for inclination—and was your wife.

“ I have loved, perhaps do I still love *Augustus*,” said I to you, before your hand was solemnly given me. “ Envy not the tears I may shed, the sighs I may breathe, the reveries I may indulge myself in. Exert all the powers of art and nature to please me : my virtue will talk for you—help her eloquence with love and indulgence.”——

You promised ; you swore—you kept your word. Not once have you offended—not once, for a great while, did I myself offend.—Though I soon discovered the illusion which had put you in my arms, I would still be deluded—my imagination befriended you to my heart.

“ He shall be unhappy if he thinks I love him not,” said I to myself—and I assumed the countenance of a fond feeling wife.—My heart murmured against the deceit—’twas the first

first I ever was guilty of—it made you happy ;
I thought myself innocent.

Love baffled every attempt I made to be free.
Augustus was engraved on my heart with a character that defied time, your passion and virtue—an absence of a few days gave it an indelible die—when you came back, I saw but the husband, I felt but for *Augustus*. Then I gave way to melancholy, then to grief, then to despair—I wished for death again. Your caresses were a vexation, your pleasures a torment.—My soul objected to hypoerisy, and your delights—but very seldom did you find it on my lips—nature, not love, sometimes forced it in my transports.—As I no longer practised the art which had deluded you, you grew sensible of my indifference.—I saw tears you suppressed in vain——pantings, which told me the inward painful emotion: your tongue dissembled your feelings, but your heart spoke them perpetually in your eyes.—I sighed, pitied—but could not be false—the idea of *Augustus* forbid me to be false ; it intoxicated my discretion, and ruled over my sensibility.

At

At the prime of life I feared death—prudence pointed to pleasures—I obeyed. In the pursuit of them I met some diversions, not one real joy—*Augustus* ever was before me.—Lord William G—— appeared—every former impression vanished—like a God, he erased all the past from my memory, and sprung a new life in me.—I forgot *Augustus*, you, my honour, all the world.—Had I once said “I love you, Sir C——,” you would have had reason to complain—then could I have answered you, “why have you “ceased to please?”—Can I at will conform my sentiments to my duty?—I might feign—I will not.

SARAH B——.

H—— H——.

Wednesday, 10 o'clock.

L E T.

LETTER XXV.

The Countess P— to Captain F—

IF not upon duty, when you have read this, mount your horse, and take the north road. There you will meet lord William G—, who is hourly expected. See him, and prepare his heart against the mortal news of lady Sarah's dangerous situation. Poor lady Sarah! her body has at last yielded to the preying anxiety of her mind. Fever—a delirium—all is apprehended from the exquisiteness of her feelings, and the delicacy of her spirits. The physicians dare not to pronounce—their silence is frightful. —

Her

Her transports, in the height of her fit, declared openly her hatred to Sir C——, her passion for lord William. Ten times in one minute her lover's name fled from her lips.—“ I love you “——oh! dear William, how I love you!” These words she expressed as if knowing what she felt—her hatred, fiery and unmeaning, partook solely of her disorder.

Lady Sarah knows not lord William's coming. His last letter Mrs. B — received an hour ago, and communicated to me—how his soul will be affected—his heart bleed! his love is so true—make use, captain, of all the flexibility which generous pity can give to save a wretch from despair. Threaten him with lady Sarah's displeasure, if he does not return immediately to Scotland, or follow you to your own country seat till he hears from her. Soften the odious message with the assurance of an eternal love, and of flying to him at the first opportunity. Tell him, that an attempt to see her may for ever part two hearts prudence will join again. If too impetuous, and loving, to obey reason and
his

his mistress's commands, he resolves to come, then, captain, break by degrees the fatal secret.—Study his features, observe his motions—mistake not the minute he may listen to you without imminent danger to his life.—Share in his sorrow, he shall be less unhappy.—No need is there to tell him how really ill lady Sarah is; a sincere lover is easily alarmed; never hope enters his heart; it is wholly taken up with fears, distraction, and fury.—To your diligence and success is attached my forgiveness.—Let me be certain that lord William will live, then I will say “Captain I love thee.”

H—— H——

Thursday 4 o'clock.

LET-

LETTER XXVI.

Captain F—— to the Countess P——.

OF all the commands Jenny ever laid upon me, none was more acceptable to my heart than her last, since it offers me an opportunity to oblige, and displays a new charm in her character. Your concern for lord William G—— is my own—your feelings are my happiness.—You will say “Captain I love thee!” to be humane that temptation I need not—Were I dead to pity it would make a man of me.—I will write no more, but mount my horse and obey.

Half an hour past 4 o'clock.

LET-

LETTER XXVII.

Sir C— B— to the D— of R— O

My lord D—

TILL this day I knew not what love was.

I thought my enjoyments had told me its pleasures, the indifference of lady Sarah its pains—I was deceived. Her illness has given me new feelings—no longer am I unacquainted with all its powers to please, and to torture.—Oh! my heart, my heart!—what troubles—what a confusion in my heart! it bursts with the agony of despair—I hourly die from the fear of losing lady Sarah.

H

At

At this minute I am sensible only of her danger ; it expiates for all her faults — She has none—never had she any—she obeyed a supreme law written in her heart—I was wrong to complain.

Like a miser, who possesses a treasure, and knows not its real value, I considered but lady Sarah's beauty, and neglected her virtues. Had I esteemed those I would have endeavoured to deserve her—I did not—she is innocent. I will upbraid but myself for my wife's hatred—she is too generous to have yielded to a passion my behaviour had not forced into her breast.

“ Not once did you offend.”—These are her own words: they are not my justification: I should have pleased, and torn her soul from love, Augustus, the necessity of dissipation, and fixed her to myself. Her virtue had been my advocate: I would have succeeded.—She was all tenderness and gratitude—what more powerful auxiliaries could I have had!—her sensibility might have been worked to my advantage; it had, like wax in the hands of an adept, taken the
form

form agreeable to my fancy.—Oh ! how inconsiderate I have been !

As I entertained no hopes of pleasing, my spirits sunk into inactivity. — I lived contented with the raptures she did not forbid me to enjoy — yet might I have warmed her soul to the fire of my own, and made it dissolve in mutual bliss ! — her wanderings I have caused.—I was the sole spring of every folly she indulged — my disgrace is not hers, but my own. — Self-love, silence ! I will be just : lady Sarah is not guilty.

* * * * *

An hour I have past at the foot of lady Sarah's bed — that whole hour my blood boiled with anger against myself. — She cursed her fate, and the husband God had given her in his wrath — “ Yet, what had she done that deserved it ? No — thing — she had loved.” — Then tenderness succeeded to fury—lord William G——n—Oh my lord ! how I suffered ! every expression tore my heart——killing was every sigh——every rolling of her eyes——she looked for my rival——fancied she saw him——talked to him——tendered

her hand——opened her arms——invited him to
her lips——the sight I could not bear——I flew
from the room——I am a wretch indeed !



N. B. There were here a few lines more, but tears had
made them so unintelligible, that my heart, though par-
taking of Sir C——'s situation, would not attempt to re-
store them a life he himself alone could have given them.

LET-

LETTER XXVIII.

Captain F—— to the Countess P——.

ONE mile beyond St. Alban's I discovered a man riding on the wings of the wind—forgive the expression, Jenny—the swiftness of his horse, and the clouds of dust formed on each side, painted him to my fancy flying in the air—I saw but him.

It must certainly be, thought I, either a clergyman posting to court for preferment, or a rogue of a steward carrying the news to a spendthrift of the sudden death of a rich relation. I was mistaken—it was a lover—it was lord William G—— himself.

Had

Had you, Jenny, lived in the times the dead arose from their graves, and came to play our wise ancestors many infernal tricks, you would not have been at a loss to delineate his lordship's ghastly features. Of a phantom he was the very picture—children and fools would he have as easily frightened away. Hollow dying eyes—hanging cheeks—emaciated body—sweat and dust over his face—I knew him not—he knew me—stopped, and with the broken voice of a panting breath——

“ F—— here !—how is she—captain, how is she !——

How inquisitive his looks !—how impatient his ears !

“ Lady Sarah is well, my lord.—

He smiled, and was instantly another man.

“ So delicate, so loving, yet so healthy ! heavens be praised ! fortune has not totally declared against me since my Sarah is well.—
“ How I long to see her !—this day I'll brave
“ all

“ all dangers—I must, and will see her. Felici-
 “ tate me, captain, on the approaching inter-
 “ view——how exquisitely delightful ! My soul
 “ shall not support the bewitching scene — I’ll
 “ enjoy it to a pain —— perhaps death will
 “ attend the rapturous transports.——Go, dear
 “ F——, go whither pleasure waits for you—I
 “ fly to H—— h——.

“ Friendship, not pleasure, called me on this
 “ road. I purposely came to prevent an in-
 “ discretion which will put a period to your
 “ happiness. Wait for a day more favourable
 “ to your desires—this, prudence bids you not
 “ to give to love and lady Sarah.—Let a week
 “ pass, then——

“ A week ! talk not thus —— to hear you
 “ is worse than absence—a week ! my soul is
 “ impatient of one minute’s delay—I cannot,
 “ will not beggar my life of its sole delights—
 “ this instant I fly—adieu.——

“ Stop, my lord, stop—

He

He spurred his horse and vanished from my sight. I followed—soon I found him lying on the ground, his horse by his side half spent with fatigue. I alighted—spoke—no answer.—His lordship was fainting, weltering in his blood.—He had fractured his skull.—Jenny! I will not tell thee my sensations—thou hast a heart, thou wilt feel them. A little spring was near the spot: I filled my hat with water, washed the wound, and tied my handkerchief round his head. A return post-chaise passing by, with the help of the postillion, I carried him in, and drove to St. Alban's. A sigh he breathed on entering the inn restored the spirits his danger had ravished from me. Every sense awoke at that sigh, the first sign of life he had given since his fall. The surgeon was called, visited the wound, turned to me, who, between life and death, waited for his opinion.

“Be comforted, Sir, your friend will live—a few hours rest, and he shall be yours again—

A wedding-day is not more agreeable to two young virtuous lovers, than the assurance which the surgeon gave me of lord William's recovery.

I hugged

I hugged him in my arms, and forced my purse upon him.—Not one word—I could not speak : I felt—I was silent.

Lord William is asleep. His heart beats high, but his pulse is easy, natural. No fever is apprehended.—Chance, however cruel in its means, has favoured him—were it not for his fall, he and lady Sarah had been absolutely undone.—My dear countess would never have said, “ Captain I love thee ”—I had partaken of their misery.

His lordship cannot be removed these four or five days, so extremely faint has the loss of blood made him. —Would that lady Sarah might recover in this interval ! — This I as sincerely wish, as that my Jenny may be convinced I live but for her.

F—

St. Alban's,
One in the Morning.

L E T.

LETTER XXIX.

The Countess P—— to Captain F——

HOWEVER severe the news of lord William's unlucky fall, would I had none more displeasing to send you!—but, alas! I have only fatal truth to tell—lady Sarah cannot live.

Far from abating, her distemper rages with increasing fury. Her spirits are in a perpetual flow—not two hours these twenty-four has her soul been at rest.—Her eyes have lost their fire, and her lips their bloom—her strength decays visibly

bly—the deadly veil covers already her face—
her speech declares her alive—every other sense
tells her dead.——

Sometimes her posture expresses a deep attention. Her neck stretched even to pain, her looks fixed, her hand before her as to command silence, it seems as if she listens, and is fearful not to hear well.—Now she will speak an incoherent soliloquy—and the next minute burst into tears and laughter.—How eloquent her despair, affecting her sorrow, graceful each action! Her agony might charm the most insensible heart—she alone could thus wrap up in illusion these minutes of horror, and still please, still be admired at the last frightful gasps of life.

No conversation between Sir C—— and me. He at the foot, I at lady Sarah's bedside—our countenance is not to be described. Sighs and sobbings warn us of each other's presence—our language is our mutual grief. I know no character, no feelings like Sir C—'s.—He deserved a better fate—envy him not a tear—I will shed one for him.

Have

—Have a peculiar care of lord William, and thank fortune, which, by forcing him to his bed, has made further art and falshood needless to you : however necessary in the circumstance you was in, they are a torment to men of honour.

Adieu.

N ——— H ———

Half an hour past three.

LET-

LETTER XXX.

Captain F—— to the Countess P—.

I Had given way to sleep upon lord William's bed, when awaking to the mournful notes of grief, I saw him sitting by me in the fullen posture of disappointment. He sighed, shook his head, named lady Sarah, and with one "Alas!" "how unlucky!" lift both his hands up with the fervency of a devotee begging a favour of heaven.

Our age, Jenny, is the season of enthusiasm. Youth is naturally under the sway of passion—but at that time of life desire is felt and uncontrolled.—

trolled.—Forefight is a plague we are not tormented with—the present is all with us : once tempted we surrender and enjoy.

Obstacles, like flowers in a wilderness, have a charm which gives pleasure its genuine poignancy—it inflames a soul to a pang of delight.

“ How many the bars between happiness and “ me !” exclaimed lord William, sinking upon the pillow.—“ Let me not complain,” resumed he with coolness, “ were not I disturbed in “ the possession of lady Sarah, my love would “ end in indifference. — A stranger to the heavenly transports of constant desire, I would “ languish my days away in dislike or sorrow.”

Then he sobbed, turned on his left, and fell asleep.

He dreamed—our dreams, Jenny, are the thoughts of nature : our soul is then her's, and not education's : it has neither fears nor scruples, but burns to possess, and to be happy.

The

The sight of my honest friend's passion was grateful to my heart.—Thus would I have talked, thus felt, thus dreamed, had my Jenny been lady Sarah.—One sigh he has now just breathed—his heart is awaked, tho' his senses are asleep.—I will listen—his features only tell me he loves, and thinks of lady Sarah.—How calm his repose!—happiness must be in view—'tis the balm which has chased anxiety from his face, and given it the freshness of pleasure.—He smiles—this omen I welcome—they shall be happy.

St. Alban's,
Six o'clock.—

P. S. Write of lady Sarah : I am impatient.

* * * * *

P. S. Richard just alighted—what hast thou written ? “ No hopes of lady Sarah ! she “ cannot live ! ” — Lord William—unfortunate youth ! Alas ! may he not awake ! in my looks he will see lady Sarah cannot

not live.—I am too oppressed to command
 my sorrow.—Why, Jenny, instead of
 me did not you send an insensible? your
 orders he had obeyed—I am not the
 man : I must be miserable.

LET-

LETTER XXXI.

Sir C—B—to the D— of R—.

LET her live, let her die, my fate will not change; I am doomed to be miserable.—Her death shall be mine—her life lord William's—oh! let her die; the pain will be less intolerable: a dagger will soon put an end to my sufferings. 'Tis better not to be than to hear of a happy rival.—Her death let him alone outlive to revenge my injuries—his despair will be a grateful offering to my shade—in the silence of the grave I will exult at his wretchedness—too inhuman are my wishes—let him die, or let her live.—Not me, but lady Sarah's husband,

I

band,

band, he has offended——this is a borrowed character fated to grief and infamy.—Youth feels and thinks not——imprudence lord William could not avoid——forcibly was he carried off by passion in the vortex of vice and folly——what shriekings!——the noise increases—new fears fill my heart—heavens spare lady Sarah!—upon me—me alone pour every evil!—the countess P—!—Sarah is no more.—



It was a panic terror. They thought she had breathed her last—my heart ceased to beat—a fainting saved me from instant death—she lived when I recovered.—She lives—am I to lament or rejoice? Honour—how weak his voice! love—how powerful! this is my soul's over-ruling passion—I cannot, will not obey another.

An unexpected crisis has given lady Sarah's disease a more favourable turn.—Her fits more short, her fever less violent, her ravings less sensible, pronounce her out of danger.—My presence may cause a relapse—she must not see me—
however

however painful absence, I will submit to it—in her favour I'll forget myself.—What will become of me? I know not—pity lady Sarah, my lord, it will weaken my misery.

H—— H——

LETTER XXII

Captain F—— to the Countess P——

2

LET. I 2

LETTER XXXII.

Captain F—— to the Countess P——

SLEEP, and the hope of seeing lady Sarah, had renewed lord William's spirits. "His wound was a trifle — his fall only had caused the numbness of his senses." — The loss of his blood his passion made up — full of health and life his lordship talked of lady Sarah.

His impatience, Jenny, my soul indiscreetly approved. I heard his longings with rapture — "so long his absence! — so near the object he adores!" — His amorous fury passed into my heart — I named H—— h—— as the center of
of

of happiness, ordered the horses, and absolutely forgot thy commands.

“Now art thou my friend,” said lord William, leaping out of the bed with a transport of joy, “let us go.—

His strength answered not his desire. He complained of every limb——was forced to lean against a table——could hardly see.—I went to him.

“Imagination, captain, has deceived me. My soul, in the luxuriance of its wishes, never thought of my body.—

And with a curse, and a few limpings, he got to bed again.

Then only, Jenny, from his inability of going, I happened to reflect.—“Lady Sarah may be dead.”—How imprudent! the thought distracted me—I turned upon my heel to conceal my confusion from him. Lord William mistook my motion for concern.

“Your

“ Your trouble, dear captain, is pain to me
 “ —let me alone be miserable—your friendship
 “ shares too feelingly in my sensations.—— A
 “ good heart is an offensive quality—’tis a per-
 “ petual torment—yet is there a charm in shedding
 “ a tear—in being affected with another’s grief
 “ —none but the sensible enjoy it.—Come, cap-
 “ tain, tune thy soul to mine : let both be won-
 “ derfully sad—I yield to the rigour of my bad
 “ fortune.——

“ Complain not of fortune, my lord, she is
 “ your friend—I was not. My compliance was
 “ folly. You would have displeased lady Sarah
 “ who will be obeyed. I gave way to pity, and
 “ exposed you to everlasting sorrow.—An at-
 “ tempt, your faithful Sarah made some days ago
 “ to escape, proved unsuccessful——from that
 “ time she is more strictly observed——every
 “ avenue to H—— h—— is crowded with
 “ spies—discretion and patience only will con-
 “ quer all difficulties. Lady Sarah shall be
 “ yours, dear William, but you must deserve
 “ her by domineering over passion—violence
 “ is seldom happy.——

“ Cap-

" Captain! lady Sarah will think me dead if
 " I obey. ——— Her tongue gave the command
 " ——— but surely her heart did not dictate. My
 " fight will secure my pardon ——— when she
 " sees me she will forget the offence. Would I
 " had strength! — but every limb is in agony — I
 " am bruised all over. ———

" Write to lady Sarah, my lord, you have
 " yielded to her intreaties, and followed me
 " to ———

" She will not believe ——— she will think of
 " murderers — you know not, captain, how lov-
 " ing my Sarah is ——— from me she does not ex-
 " pect prudence ——— in her eye I shall be a de-
 " spicable coward — a frozen lover — she would
 " hate me. ———

" How more dreadful to her, my lord, the
 " certainty of your indisposition! a motive must
 " be given for your absence ——— would you give
 " the true? ———

" The true from me! ——— no, ten thousand
 " lies would I rather contrive ——— I have no ho-
 " nour

"nour when the safety of my Sarah is at stake.

"——I'll write I have obeyed—not a greater
"falshood can I now think of.—Let me not
"cool, captain——or never will I write the
"damned lie.——

I will not tell thee, Jenny, how often lord
William began, tore the paper, exclaimed—
'tis false, by heavens! I obey not—I am sick
——sick to the impossibility of seeing thee."——
Thy fancy will describe better than my pen,

"Take this, captain.——

And he gave me a letter he had just finish-
ed.

"Were I to read it again, it would have the
"fate of the former—I am vexed to the soul
"——say you esteem me, or I'll despise myself.
"——Should ever Sarah know I have deceived her
"——but her sensibility must be spared—her
"happinefs is the only law in my heart.—
"Captain, do with me at your pleasure—my
"weakness answers for my obedience—I'll stay,
"or follow you—no matter, since I cannot
"see lady Sarah.——

I rejoiced

I rejoiced at this unexpected resolve, and strengthened it, not with reasons, those he had easily refuted, but by indulging him in his passion, and swearing to see him happy.—His transports have subsided.——

“ Think for me, captain — I can but love. —

This I have promised — but I must not hear him: he talks me into indiscretion. I am too young not to suffer with him—too young to advise——his folly is my own—nature betrays me.

St. Alban's, White Hart,

Four o'clock.

LET-

LETTER XXXIII.

The Countess P— to Captain F—.

WHETHER her good or bad star has brought lady Sarah from the gates of death, I cannot tell; but her recovery is no longer doubtful—she shall live—to what end? Would I could fix it! she would be happy.—Friendship in my wishes for lady Sarah betrays me not into immorality—nature's law was before man's.—The gratification of the senses, when on fire by the involuntary passions of the heart, who can condemn? Were it not extravagant to punish a blind man for falling into an abyss!

we

we are all that blind man.—Indifference only is wisdom, and that wisdom the satire of life.—I never knew the passionate led by the strings of moderation, no more than the injured brave flying from the face of his enemy. The insensible may talk of virtue, as cowards of the law which forbids a duel—these are *walking shades among living men*.

I have read *Locke*, *Montesquieu*, *Voltaire*, and I have been convinced that casualties in men's station, fortune, and tempers, are the sole authors of their vices and virtues. The ambitious mistaking fame for honour, march at the head of thousands, and without remorse put to the sword nations that never offended him—the starved soldier robs, and sometimes murders on the highway—the miser, unfaithful to his trust, pillages the subjects he should see happy—each of them obeys a want he would not have known had he felt in another manner, been placed in a different circumstance. Had lady Sarah, before she saw either *Augustus* or Sir C—, given her hand to lord William, her virtue would have been a pattern
for

for her sex—not once had she indulged in a thought of which he was not the object—love had made her modest, as hatred inconstant. She would then have forced the praises of all the world ; but these praises had been unmerited—to fidelity she would have been necessitated by passion.

The more you write of lord William, the more I excuse lady Sarah—in my heart only I seek for my opinion of them.

Of lady Sarah's recovery you may entertain a hope ; but give it not to lord William—were an unforeseen accident to destroy it, what length might not his despair carry him to !—his ignorance is his happiness.

N——H——

LET-

LETTER XXXIV.

Lord WILLIAM G—— to Lady SARAH B——

YOUR commands I detest—how came you, Sarah, to say I must obey?—passion bids me not—Is not my passion in your breast? you could think of not seeing me—Was not one minute of my presence to be esteemed above life? What is that life when absent from me?—My indiscretion might have made you miserable—that fear declares a want of love — if you think, you are indifferent.—Cautions I scorn—timorous Sarah! Whence the till now unknown dread? Had I seen you, and died, I would have smiled, and kissed the mortal weapon—my last
breath

breath I had breathed in your arms, with such a complacency as to confuse my enemies, and blunt their hopes of a revenge—my death would have been my triumph, and their shame.—

You bid me “to wait till I hear from you”—the inhuman order you durst not to write; your heart too powerfully opposed it—I’ll believe that heart and go—I cannot—I am—your anger I apprehend—such a passion thy William could cause!—no; thy soul will not feel it—I will go—what stops me!—thy displeasure—I will obey.

St. Alban's.

LET-

LETTER XXXV.

Captain F—— to the Countess P——.

HIS weakness, not his reason, subdued lord William's fiery temper. He grew less resolute as he suffered the more.

“Passion, dear captain, will not silence my
“pains. If for a few minutes it lulls them a-
“sleep, their acuteness renews with greater sensi-
“bility—impatience gives them a life they have
“not from nature.—Take me from hence—
“the nearer I am to London, the keener my
“sorrow.—I think I breathe the same air; it
“increases my desire to see lady Sarah.—My
“long-

"longings, like a deserved punishment, are
"death to my heart.—Take me from hence.—

The expression lord William gave each word was the forcible accent of nature—he talked as he felt—my soul delighted in the tone of his voice.—I am a man, and a lover, Jenny, yet not so tenderly could I be affected—not so ingenuously tell of my woe. When I listen, my heart is his; no longer does it beat to Sir C—'s misery—all my concern centers in him.

Our mutual sadness, in a solitary place, might create the contempt of life—of this my uneasy soul convincing me I changed my former design, and proposed to lord William Wycombe in Buckinghamshire.

"Lord L—D—'s house would not do for a man of his present turn of mind—a wilderness was more acceptable—his thoughts were the only guests he would entertain—these and my friendship the pleasure he wished for."

I thought of an honest farmer in the neighbourhood of Royston. There nine months ago

I made

I made every tree confident of my love for Jenny—there I sighed away the seven days her virtue incensed at one attempt I made kept me from her.

“I shall hear,” said I to myself, “my Jenny’s name from the parrot I taught it—the linnet will warble the loving tune she always makes me repeat—though far from her, all will tell me of Jenny—I shall be happy.”

Lord William making no objection, I hired a post coach, wrapped him up in pillows, and at the rate of four miles an hour arrived at this place. Its romantic situation pleased his lordship’s melancholic soul.

“Here, dear captain, we shall have no intruder
“but the echo; ’tis the best friend to lovers.—

Mr. Bellmal the farmer, to whom I had dispatched Henry, received us with the cordiality of the earl of Darlington. He has not his riches, but his heart——were they to change stations, though the fictitious character should

K

vanish,

vanish, still would you find the reality of man, goodness and generosity.

On entering the parlour, the grateful parrot, fluttering his wing, welcomed me with "Jenny, Jenny, I love thee."—Lord William smiled, named Sarah; but Jenny would the faithful bird pronounce—I thanked him with a piece of biscuit.

From the jolting of the coach I feared for lord William; the contrary has happened: the motion has almost wearied him into health. With the help of my arm he has walked one part of the garden. Thy name on the bark of a myrtle excited his curiosity: he would know the real cause of my having lived here. He loves, he cannot be indiscreet; I will tell it him.

No suspicion has his lordship of lady Sarah's malady—in my grief he sees but my friendship for him. Did he know she cannot live—I will not think of his despair—Richard! from this window I see him riding full speed—how my heart pants! should the news he brings confirm
my

my fears, I would detest thee, Jenny—upon
me thou hast imposed a duty not to be fulfilled.
—Thy confidence in me I owe to thy hatred—
thy lover was unfit for the charge—an enemy
thou shouldst have thought of—the more feel-
ing he, the more certain thy revenge.—Richard!
—I will not believe his features; they may be-
tray me into a false joy. — A letter—I tremble.

I have read.—Happy — the happiest of men
thou hast made me, Jenny. — “Lady Sarah
lives” — My joy is too great. —

Adieu.

Clopton.

K 2

LET.

LETTER XXXVI.

The Countess P—to Captain F

LOVERS, like children, will not part with the toy which delights their fancy ; sickness and fear may silence their passion, but not destroy it—they will enjoy the thought though deprived of the reality.

The first minute, free from delirium, lady Sarah breathed, she gave to lord William, My tears told her of her past danger — her eyes filled with gratitude—but her heart panted for William.

“ Where

"Where is he, Jenny?——

"Not far off.——

"Unhappy?——

"Absence is his torment.——

"Has he heard of me?——

"I concealed your illness—— he would not
"have outlived the apprehension of losing
"you——

"Generous Jenny!——

"But in your name I bid him not to
"come.——

She attempted to rise on her bed.

"In my name!——

And with a cast-down eye she leaned against
my breast.

"In my name! — did he believe?——

"He did not.——

She smiled.

"He knew my heart.——What keeps him
"from me?——

"The

"The fear of making you miserable.—"

"Imprudence would.—"

"He waits for a decisive opportunity.—F—
"is with him—"

"Thy friendship, Jenny, is our guardian an-
"gel. Next to William, Jenny I love.—"

Often, when I answered thy raptures, hast
thou said the charm of my voice heightened thy
transports—oftener still hast thou preferred the
"dear captain!" to a kiss— one word from
my lips fixed thy soul upon them—I am not
lady Sarah. Her tongue has inexpressible grace;
it moves but to create desires—but to force into
a heart all the enthusiasm of pleasure. Envy of
her beauty, the passion of every woman, is for-
got when she talks—she is then a flatterer you
listen to—a passion you indulge in a tender
reverie.—Her action none have—'tis a dis-
play of temptations the more powerful as they are
natural.— In her presence your soul is no longer
yours,

yours, but hers; it is impatient of roving on her ivory neck, of partaking of her life, of dying in her arms.—Though a woman, my lips would wander, my hand seek for a sensation.—Friendship deceives me not; a man might with glory to himself lose all the world for her.—Lord William G——, should I ever wish for change of sex, I would be him—he alone could tempt me not to be thy Jenny.

* * * * *

“Your weakness, Sarah, needs discretion—
“a lover is not a topic for the sick.—

“It is the only restorative, Jenny. Let me
“talk of William, and I shall be well.—Was
“he not impatient of my commands?—

“He was.—To F——’s entreaties he yielded
“with pain—“you will lose the lovely Sarah if
“you obey not,” said my captain to him.—
“He loves—his resolution vanished; he com-
“plied.—

“Has he denied himself the comfort of a
“complaint? Has he not written?—

“He

And I put in her hand lord William's last letter.

" 'Tis from him—I know the dear characters!—"

She sighed, and broke the seal open.

" My eyes are yet too weak—read, dear Jenny.—"

Every phrase she interrupted with an eulogium of lord William, and an approbation of her love for him. Tears of joy she shed in my bosom.

" I love him—I love him.—"

'Twas all she could feel—all she could express.

" I must and will write a few lines—he will despair if I write not.—"

" Your strength is inadequate to the task.—"

" your health may be endangered—this evening

—to-morrow—"

" No,

"No, Jenny: my heart tells me of William's impatience——his happiness is my health.——"

A true lover, captain, never was at a loss for expressions—there is no trouble in tracing our real sentiments, their flow is as easy as it is natural. Lady Sarah took the pen, wrote; and the smile of pleasure enlivened every feature—Sir C——! ——

Another such conversation, and I'll grow so dull as to frighten you, my lovely youth, away from me. That man has made me sad to a fainting—I must breathe the fresh air.

The glass tells me that sorrow embellishes not.—No brightness in my eye; no vermillion on my cheeks—the trace of a tear on my neck!

—'tis well I am alone; I would hate to be seen.

—"Your sorrow, Jenny, is your praise."——

We women, captain, never or seldom esteem a compliment which is not paid to our beauty.

Tell

Tell us of the desires we inspire, we will for-
give your silence on our good nature : talk of
this to the deformed—again interrupted!—'tis
my lord.

Adieu.

N—H—

LET.

LETTER XXXVII.

Lady SARAH B—— to Lord WILLIAM G——

I Suffer, as thou suffereſt——no more than thee, William, am I patient—do I yield to neceſſity. Abſence is to me as cruel as death to an amorous youth going to his firſt rendezvous.—My paſſion hates prudence, and bids it from my thoughts—for thy ſake only I entertain the odious ſtranger. — A few days of miſeries will enliven our raptures, and fix thee for ever happy in my arms.—To ſome hours of ſtolen delights let us not ſacrifice a whole life of tranſports

ports and mutual love.—I have, William, the watchfulness of a lord B——, intent on cheating his king of his reason—the first opportunity, I will seize, and be thine.

$$\text{H} \text{---} \text{H}$$

L E T T E R S

Sp. C. in B. to the D. of R. in G.

LET.

140

ports and mutual love—I have, William, the
watchfulness of a lord B—— intent on cheat-
ing his king of his reason—the first opportunity
I will seize, and be thine
not—however inconsistent lady Sarah shall not
H—— H——
with the history of our race, and the
vices of our temper—Let palea in what we
fill

LETTER XXXVIII.

Sir C— B—— to the D— of R——

My lord D——

HOWEVER full of indignation my heart
may be, of severity it scorns the language
— a reproachful word lady Sarah shall not
hear—though I have lost her love, she has not
lost my esteem —— her foibles are yours,
mine, all mankind's——nature justifies them.
The husband shall not prevail over the man —
as such I am unhappy, but not insensible and
cruel.

Did

Did lady Sarah's passion prove a defect in my character, and expose me to the contempt of all the world, my anger against her would be unjust, unreasonable: as discreetly might we charge our parents with the deformity of our faces, and the vices of our tempers.—Her passion humbles me not—however inconstant lady Sarah, Sir C— is still a man of honour.

I am with respect,

Your Grace's

Most humble servant,

C— B—

Privy-Garden,
Friday 7 o'clock.

LETTER XXXIX.

The Countess P— to Captain F—.

HUSBANDS are the most contradictory creatures upon earth. Like the colours of the cameleon, their thoughts, whims, and passions vary. Each hour of the day brings a new feature — smiles and frowns, flattery and impertinence, succeed rapidly one another — a husband! what a duplicity in the character!

The

The real sentiments of a rogue are sometimes at the command of the friend who has no interest to deceive him——often are they marked in his pleasures——left to nature, he enjoys and reflects not.——Husbands are the monsters, who, insensible of friendship, know not the charm of disclosing one's heart.——Their caresses are the languid wants of satiety, their anger the longings of desire, their expressions the equivocations of hypocrisy.——Now they beg for happiness, then tell you of their hatred——I am surfeited of that foolish—false—conceited animal.

Lord P—— is more troublesome than the necessity of paying a debt of honour. He is to me a wish I cannot realize, a desire I cannot satisfy——envy in a woman's breast is not so true as my contempt of him.——He is the sun which in a dogday plays unmercifully its rays upon us, and heats our spirits to a flame——thou the friendly shade——the cool spring which revives our senses.

Lord

Lord P—— I receive in my arms ——
'tis a downright prostitution——never more
will I be guilty of it. The delicacy of my sex
men have disgraced by their laws.——Vir-
tue! the wisest of mankind are thy most mor-
tal enemies. —— None would force un-
healthy food on the infirm; yet, regardless
of our dislike or hatred, they bid to our bo-
som the man we cannot love.——They won-
der that modesty is almost a stranger among us
—— how could she have votaries, when the
duties ordered by opinion destroy it in our
hearts?——Not pleasure, but the indiffer-
ence with which we give it, is criminal.——
Virtue, I do not offend in my transports with
thee: I do in suffering the raptures of lord
P——.

Lady Sarah is well. Were I certain that
lord William would keep incog, I would
write, "Come, dear captain, come, thy ab-
sence has been thy friend——it has en-
deared thee to me."——Be not angry——

L

I am

Lord

Lord

I am a woman—absence enlivens passion.

Adieu.

P. S. I have marked this letter with three kisses for thee—find them out, and be happy.

N—H—

LET-

LETTER XL.

Captain F—— to the Countess P——.

ACCUSE me not, Jenny, of having betrayed the charge thou gavest me — my heart, however a friend to lord William, will receive no law but from thee. — Un- suspected, lord William left Clopton, and came to London. Richard's indiscretion was the cause — though displeased, Jenny, be just, upbraid me not with it. I love — thy anger I fear — spare thy F——; he is innocent — the thought of offending

thee he never had.——My youth tells me imprudent, my passion for thee proves me true to thy commands——these, and not my pity I have obeyed. Once my soul sharing in his lordship's feelings, my reason vanished——its flight I owned——thou forgavest. Ever since I distrusted my sensibility——Jenny was my only oracle——her I placed between lord William's sorrow and me: she blunted the keenness of his sufferings——they made me unhappy, but blinded not my judgment——I felt, but I thought——victory was mine.

Lady Sarah's letter had cured every pain of lord William. His joy spoke the lover——the whole evening I heard only of love and lady Sarah. The next day when I called, Richard's countenance announced me a misfortune. The tears he could not suppress spread the alarm over every sense——I opened my lips, fear closed them again.——A letter he held in his hand.——

“ Whence

" Whence your trouble——that letter?——

" Speak.——

He fell at my feet — implored my forgiveness——

" For what?——

His confusion passed into my heart.

" He had thoughtlessly dropped a word to
" lord Willam's servant on lady Sarah's illness.——

" Oh Richard ! what have you done?——
" where is my friend?——

And I ran to the door.

" This morning with the rising sun he
" got up——then took his horse, and rode to
" London.——This letter was found upon his
" bed.——

I read the letter——it calmed me. " His
" word he will not break——the man answers
" for the lover——no danger will attend his journey to London." These were my reflexions.
I dressed, and followed him here. I alighted at the *Hummums*. His lordship has been out
these

these two hours.—I will see him.—Jenny,
 I durst not call upon you.—I passed and
 repassed before N—h—: my courage fail-
 ed.—The first fury of your indignation I
 dreaded—the encounter my heart was not
 prepared for. Let not your friendship for lady
 Sarah prejudice the lover.—Answer me not
 immediately—thy vivacity thou wouldst re-
 pent in a cool hour—spare thyself a tear the
 consciousness of thy injustice would force from
 thy lovely eyes.—Write—but in the style and
 feelings of my Jenny.

Tilt-yard.

P. S. I send thee lord William's letter.

Lord

Lord WILLIAM G—— to Captain F——

Your silence on lady Sarah's situation I thank you for, captain. The mortal anxiety I would have necessarily laboured under, I could not have born—to your humanity I owe my life—this, as your own, is at all times at your command.

Sarah is better, but is not yet well—my heart, too interested in its hopes, may be deceived—my eyes and ears only can I trust for my Sarah's recovery. Her answer, and your joy last night on the perusal of the Countess P——'s letter, weaken my fears—you would not have smiled had lady Sarah been in danger—but I love I still apprehend.—Your friendship deserves my gratitude—you must not be unhappy on my subject, I——

* * * * *

N. B. The rest of the letter was torn off.

L E T.

LETTER XLI.

Sir C—B—to the D— of G—.

My Lord,

YOUR counsel I cannot follow—you are not a pattern for me : my heart dies away at the thought of a divorce. However true, this day, lady Sarah's hatred ; to-morrow she may change—a woman of her character will at last yield to her duty. My passion indulges in that hope—a divorce would destroy it.—
Every day we forgive the mistress who betrays us ; why should not we the wife who repents ? The whims of men are not reasons to me—their folly I adopt not for wisdom.

'Tis

'Tis not lady Sarah's person, my lord, but her sensibility I really adore—not the wife but the friend I regret. In her society the dull hours of life slip unfelt away—she talks, pleasure fills my heart—with her the laborious days of a courtier end in evenings of delight.—Her wit, her talents have a charm, a reality raptures have not: these, fancy sways: the former my reason enjoys.

Free as soon as forsaken your soul felt not the pangs of unsuccessful love: you lost your lady with the same indifference you would have been robbed of a diamond of no value. Pleasure, with you, made up for character—the contempt of the public the variety of your enjoyments silenced—regardless of the *peer* you opposed the *man* to the strokes of slander, and the *dutchess*, whom more delicacy, and less haughtiness in your temper, might have easily recalled, saw her bed prostituted to N—P—.

The infidelity of your wife, my lord, was your work—her feelings your indifference would not turn to your happiness.—The flexibility you have since shown in your political life is the effect

fect of an immoderate ambition—had your *dutcheſs*, like the thirst of power, commanded in your heart, you would have acted the lover, not the tyrant, been the happiest of husbands, not the contemptible tool of a w——. You lived in open adultery, and boasted your libertinism, yet repented, in your wife, the behaviour you was yourself publicly guilty of. — A divorce freed you—did it make you happy?—No. Start not, my lord; friendship will not flatter; from me truth only can you hear. Your new *D——s*, however amiable, graceful, and virtuous, will not make you happy—she is your wife: the name is as ungrateful to your ear and disposition as the gallows to the man who has just committed a murder. Your heart was not formed for tender sentiments—you are an absolute stranger to a generous passion—you can neither hate nor love—inconsistency is your character. Your tastes have the fire of enthusiasm; but its fits are as short as they are unnatural.—Friends and mistresses you have cherished in your bosom, then as thoughtlessly neglected and undone. Our souls are not alike, my lord. To constancy

I am

I am fated ; you are to novelty——of love and
friendship I enjoy all the charms, I feel all the
pains—you are insensible of them——your indiffer-
ence is your happiness, it would be my torment.

I am, my lord,

Your grace's

Most humble servant,

C——B——

Privy-Gardens.

LET-

LETTER XLII.

The Countess P— to Captain F—.

WERE you not innocent, captain, your guilt I would excuse—the more feeling you are, the more assured is my happiness. I did not expect you should obey—a man of your sensibility is easily betrayed into pity and the desire of serving the unfortunate. Had you brought lord William at lady Sarah's feet, my lips would have printed my forgiveness upon yours, and my soul proved its approbation with raptures. Your fear of displeasing is an affront on your Jenny—this is the real crime which calls for my anger, the other is a virtue I commend.

You

You durst not to appear before me—my lover questions my generosity!—Whence that contempt of your Jenny? true love never was injurious—you did not intend to offend—my heart tells me you did not.—Come—your fault I will not think of—come—I have forgiven.

N— H—.

LET-

LETTER XLIII.

Lord WILLIAM G—— to Captain F——.

THIS whole day, dear captain, fear, hope, and pleasure gave law to my heart—the sport of these different tumultuous passions, I have lived the life they have forced upon me—man and lover by turns, the friend was unthought of—I yielded to the resistless fury of the actual affections of my soul—I forgot thee—forgive.

With boots, whip in hand, and wrapped up to the chin in a great coat, I left the *Hummums* at nine, and with the steps of anxiety walked to H—— h——. Many times was I nigh being
elbowed

elbowed to the ground, or run over by a coach—I thought, and saw nothing. As I was crossing Leicester fields, a young female spirit stopped short before me, looked, then gazed, then exclaimed——

“ Is it possible? Lord William!—

I lowered my hat to my nose, escaped with a side-leap, and running carelessly fast rolled a man down the steps. It was a foreigner, the very identity of the chevalier *D'Eon*. The fellow is grown fat—he felt the fall, cursed in French, and put his hand to his sword. I cursed in English, flourished my whip, and cleared the way.

When I came to Coventry-street, curiosity talked—it was heard—I turned the head. The woman half limping and jumping followed me. Her features I did not recollect.—her looks threatened me with no evil—she begged with a friendly sign of her hand I would stop.—I complied.

“ Your fight, my lord, has put me out of
“ breath.—It has surprised me to the shaking of
“ every

“every limb—how you stare! Don’t you know
“me?—

And she fanned herself out of the unusual flutter of her spirits.

“That cocked hat gave you a new face,
“Mrs. D—.

This Mrs. D— is the indulgent mantua-maker, at whose house lady Sarah and I — guess the rest.

“Say the trouble of your mind, my lord, and
“not my hat.—

She smiled a concern.

“So much constancy is not, on my word, an
“honour to you—only from his want of merit
“a man can be the slave to his mistress—were
“he certain of pleasing he would love, change,
“love and change again. Variety is the life
“of the sensible, constancy the hobby-horse of
“the fools. — Come, my lord, brighten these
“heavy eyes, and make a new love—’tis
the

" the sole antidote against passion and for-
" row.——

" I cannot, Mrs. D—, I still adore lady Sa-
" rah.——

" You still adore—what! after six months
" enjoyment?——

" I do.——

" You are a wonder indeed—no less a won-
" der is lady Sarah—six months! and she has
" not given you your *congé*!—I do not under-
" stand that. —When I tell her of my amaze-
" ment, she answers like you, " I still adore
" him." Half an hour ago she told me the
" very words again and again—though from her
" lips, they are immensely tedious—what's the
" matter now?—do you faint, my lord?——

" This morning only, dear D—, I learnt lady
" Sarah was ill—however certain her danger was
" past, I could not remove fear from my heart
" —your conversation with her has made me
" happy—her " I adore him still" convinces me

M

" of

“ of her health—pleasure seized too suddenly on
 “ my senses——

“ How happy lady Sarah to have such a
 “ lover !——

“ How happier I to have such a mistress !—
 “ you know not half her charms——

“ Your transports, my lord, are lady Sarah’s
 “ — I am delighted to hear you.—My satire on
 “ constancy was a snare my curiosity laid for
 “ you. I had a mind to read your thoughts—
 “ with me you would not have been false—too
 “ many proofs you have had of my fidelity to
 “ suspect me of treachery.——

“ Does lady Sarah really love me as much
 “ as I do her ?——

“ She is more tender—you more passionate.—
 “ However feeling, decency is a rein lady Sa-
 “ rah respects—love in a man of your age and
 “ rank knows no check—your impatience, fury,
 “ expressions, are the free flights of uncontrolled
 “ nature.——

Several

Several people entering the alley in which we were retired, the sensible Mrs. D— begged I would immediately call upon her in Old Bond-street.

“ You will not regret the hours you stay
“ in my house.—Let this assurance revive your
“ heart—indulge the thought of an approach-
“ ing happiness.—

This she whispered. I pressed her hand—
spoke my gratitude in my looks, and promised
to go.

* * * * *

I durst not, captain, pass by H— h—.

Prudence was so new a conceit, that having but thee for a friend in my heart, and thou passion against thee, it might, after a few struggles, have given way to my natural indiscretion. I took Marybone-street—stopped—went on—stopped again—could not help returning to have a view, though distant, of Sarah’s prison. Ever thoughtless when she is the object of my reveries, I had almost reached the odious house, when thou camest

most in my mind. — “If any disaster happens,”
 said I to myself, “he will suffer with me.” —
 For thy sake I flew back, turned the first street,
 and got to Mrs. D——. She was not yet ar-
 rived. I asked for Miss Fanny, the lady trea-
 surer of two old rich noblemen’s purse. —
 “Heavens!” exclaimed Miss Fanny, with
 the painful stammering of fear — and starting
 two paces back —
 “Is it lord William or his shade?”

And she crossed herself.

“That popish talisman, Fanny, has no power
 “over a devil like me. —

And my lips convinced her I was not a
 spirit.

“Really alive! that’s odd enough after ha-
 “ving been thought hanged, drowned, and pi-
 “stoled out of life. —

She ushered me into the well known apart-
 ments. On entering them I sighed — not one
 part

part was there in them which did not call a pleasure to my mind—not one corner in which each sense had not enjoyed its particular delights. Of the past transports my memory renewed the sensibility——soon my heart partook of its delirium——I breathed desire, and wished for Sarah.

Fanny saw my soul in my sighs, and raptures in my enlivened eyes.——

“ Sit down by me, my lord.——”

And she placed herself on a sofa.

The loving creature had mimicked my Sarah’s voice with such art as to possess my whole attention. I would not see Fanny, but listened as if in hope of a second invitation from Sarah.

Fanny then thought her victory certain——from my trouble she expected her triumph.——Whilst I remained in suspense she drew the window-curtains down. The darkness favoured her——the illusion was then absolutely against me.

Fanny

Fanny called—I was deceived—answered Sarah
—panted, and was lost in pleasure.

Nature and imagination agreed to betray me
—Fanny's caresses confirmed the error
—When myself again, I repented not.—

Fanny is at the bewitching days of the first
kiss—her bloom speaks her health, her mo-
tions her sensibility, her accent lady Sarah—
this caused my transports: I was not guilty.

Your delicacy, captain, will perhaps exclaim
against my pleasures, or, if the circumstance I
was in expiates for them in your judgment,
you will hardly forgive my indifference for the
mistake I made—“Fanny was not Sarah”—
true F——. But at that time you yourself
would have enjoyed Jenny in the arms of Fanny.
Neither you nor I are actuated by the reason of
the insensible—we do not argue, think, and
compare, when we feel, and our hearts beat
to pleasure—in your closet you are a man—at
Mrs.

Mrs. D——'s, with Fanny, and the idea of Jenny you would have been a lover.——

* * * * *

Mrs. D—— came. On her brow wandered the talkative joy of a bearer of good news—in her countenance my happiness was written.

“Lady Sarah is impatient to be yours, my lord.—Although her servants are ordered on perpetual watch, her weakness is a security they seem to rely upon. Be cool, and attempt to free her will not be attended with invincible obstacles. Mrs. B—— and I will, if needful, operate miracles in your favour. Her ladyship's cause is all my sex's—we will support it, and make you happy.——

“Cannot I see her?——

“Thou indiscreet man—no.—Leave women to command the events which must defeat the jealousy of their tyrants. A lover is too heedless to be trusted with the important business. It requires an indifference you cannot assume, a coolness you cannot have,
“an

"an art you cannot endure. From nothing we
 "may create an opportunity — with you the
 "most conclusive is of no use.——"

"Your word is an oracle, dear D—, I will be
 "ruled—but——"

"I will hear no *buts*, my lord.——"

"Is not my Sarah longing for my pre-
 "sence?——"

"She is.——"

"She would not oppose an interview—can-
 "not such a one be contrived as not to be
 "suspected?——"

"An interview!—thoughtless lord! to what
 "end? the first shall be the end of her Na-
 "very——no other interview will we think
 "of.——"

Mrs. B—— entered the room. All softness
 in her courtesies. — She whispered Mrs. D——,
 a loud laughter was the answer. At her eager
 looks at me I thought the woman mad.

"Just

"Just like his picture—rather handsomer—"

And with an honest blush she courted a gain.

"Is this a friend of yours, Mrs. D—?"

"'Tis Mrs. B— lady H—'s waiting woman, my lord."

I welcomed her with a salute on each cheek.

Mrs. B—, in the confusion my lips had put her in, lisped a compliment I did not hear.

"This letter, my lord—"

I smiled, and led her to a seat.

My vanity, captain, was pleased with the unfeigned admiration of Mrs. B— less for the sake of the weight it added to her concern for lady Sarah and me, than of the private enjoyment of my self-love. However insignificant the flatterer, the most modest man is sensible of his praise—is it a fault? I know not. If one, I have it.

With

With a side look at Mrs. B——, who was still
 eying me from head to foot, I opened the letter.
 Here it is.

To Lord WILLIAM G——.

Thy arrival, William, I this minute enjoy—
 it may prove dangerous to our future peace—
 I will think but of the present: I know thee
 near me, I am contented. Health, which has
 been so unexpectedly restored me, is the presage
 of happier days—I have not been saved to be
 miserable—thy presence confirms my hopes
 —not long shall we be parted. —I will see my
 William, then no other wish than for thy life
 shall I have to form.

Keep at Mrs. D——'s. Believe what the wo-
 men will tell thee from me, and act as they will
 direct.

Adieu.

SARAH B——.

H—— H——

I drew

I drew near Mrs. B——, and taking her hand
in mine——

“ I will not dispute the authority lady Sarah
“ gives you over me—she bids me to obey—
“ I will.——

And in a kiss on her forehead I expressed my
gratitude for the services she had done me.
This manner of thanking was acceptable to
Mrs. B——. The continuation of her lisping,
and the alternative rise and fall of her colour,
laid her heart open before me — I could not
mistake the inward emotion.

Nature and pride, captain, are constantly on
the watch for enjoyments — nature and pride
dictate to every heart, sway over every head.—

In me Mrs. B—— did not behold lord Wil-
liam, but the lover of the sensible, delicate, vir-
tuous lady Sarah. The greater her esteem for
her ladyship, the higher I rose in her opinion—
I was not a man, but a being of a superior ex-
cellence.——

The

The woman my presence affects is intitled to a reward—the compliment her sensibility pays me is the more flattering as it is free, disinterested, totally the genuine sally of nature—words or gold are not its proper return—feelings for feelings—I know of no other.

Mrs. B— is thirty, but her heart has the pantings of eighteen, and her eyes the transient spark of pleasure, which in a prude tells you — “You may.” And then—“Stop—you must not.” This language, captain, is more inviting than that of a coquet. This calls you openly to raptures—the former is like a sumptuous banquet laid before you, and of which you cannot partake — a continual temptation. To share in the trouble you have caused, is the only bliss: — this your heart, the other your senses enjoy.

Mrs.

Mrs. D., a perfect *connoisseur* in human frailties, saw the symptoms of tenderness on Mrs. B——'s features, those of pleasure in mine. A look she cast at me declared her remark—— I smiled—— she left us alone.

"Tell me, dear Mrs. B—— the cause of
"your reverie—a lover?——"

And I sat by her.

"You yourself, my lord, was its object.

"—— Your figure has a charm which ex-

"cuses lady Sarah—— I thought of you both——

"and wished you happy.——"

The "and wished you happy" was half lost in one sigh—— totally in an involuntary heave of her bosom. Her hand mechanically touched mine; I carried it to my lips——

"My lord!——"

And with the real blush of modesty she drew it back. Then perceiving Mrs. D—— was not with us, she arose——

"Good

"Good God ! where is Mrs. D—— ?——

Fear in a woman, captain, is the sure omen of her fall.

"You are not afraid of me, dear B—— ?

The question added to her trouble.

"Why should I, my lord ?——

These words were not expressed——her looks were more true : in them the " I fear you, my lord," was easy to be read.

"If you do not, whence this trembling——
"this sudden red in your cheek ?——

The trembling, and the red increased still. She turned her head to the door, then to me—— I pitied the decent amorous woman. "She loves thee ; be not ungenerous," cried my grateful soul. I heard, obeyed, and——

"Heavens ! my lord !—— is it possible ?——
"that hand——these lips——

One sigh.

"Let

"Let me go——"

She did not struggle to get free from my arms.

"Remember lady Sarah——"

"You love me, dear B——"

* * * * *

* * * * *

"O nature, nature!——"

We fell on the sofa.

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

I have known, captain, a woman, whose virtue was really unquestionable, mistaking at quadrille guineas for counters——I have known a duke of strict honour prostituting his character

rather to a *fille de joye*—I love lady Sarah—yet
twice in the same day—with Mrs. B—— I will
exclaim “O nature, nature !”

Old Bond-street.

LETTER

Lady Sarah B—— to the Countess of——
“O nature, nature !”

We fell on the sofa.

THE least of death, I never knew
in my heart : his last words were

same—without a word, I never knew
ed into eternity, though I never
gion, I do not believe in a future state

be himself is the author of— I have known, whole
I have known, captain, a woman, whose
LETTER

quadrille guineas for counters—I have known
a duke of first honour, profiting his cha-
racter

LETTER XLIV.

Lady Sarah B—— to the Countess P——.

THE fear of death, Jenny, made no change in my heart: its affections were still the same—without a remorse I would have launched into eternity. Though a friend to religion, I do not believe in a God angry at foibles he himself is the author of—with that inconsistency my reason charges him not. Men have made the Deity speak—in his name they have established laws—these nature contradicts—I know no difference between God and nature.

N

Order

Order in society is necessary.—were mankind permitted to act as they should like, no longer could they subsist in their political life — all would enjoy—none think of a self-denial: But that necessity of order has created all the vices we are infested with. Perpetually obliged to belie our hearts, our tongue never told truth—low cunning was called prudence, and hypocrisy virtue—decency was ordered to attend libertinism, and devotion to whet the dagger of slander. The form of man was changed; his nature remained the same. The generous, and the sensible, Jenny, cannot have the watchfulness of the indifferent, or artful base minded souls—they will sometimes soar above morality and the opinion of men—life or death, honour or infamy, they will often scorn to gratify a passion. The tamed lion loses not its fierceness. Although for many years he licks the hand which feeds and fetters him, he may in one fatal hour resume his native spirits, forget and destroy. Man is that lion. The chains he wears are linked up to the note of his passions—easy when unfeeling—intolerable when love, ambition,

ambition, envy, or avarice commands in his heart. Passion, dear Jenny, like an acute pain, cannot be concealed — it has its shootings and frenzy. — You do not scold me for having the headach—be as indulgent for the anxieties of my mind—its diseases none can avoid.

An hundred times, Jenny, have I told myself what you remonstrated to me yesterday. The virtues of Sir C——, and the honour of my family, are incessantly in my memory—not one hour passes without my thinking of the levity of youth—often do I realize the apprehensions of lord William's indifference—it may happen he may cease to love me—the possibility strikes me with horror — the miser knows he shall die—— does he discontinue to hoard up money, and starve through the fear of want?—Reflect on all the different characters of men — you will find, three minutes given to wisdom for twenty days devoted to folly. This is our natural state, Jenny—the why? neither you, nor I, nor nobody knows.

H—— H——

P. S. Mrs. B— and lord William are racking their wits for my escape—many plots have been thought of, none yet fixed upon. He longs for an interview—so do I—may he find the time! he alone must find it.——

Adieu.

LET-

LETTER XLV.

Sir C—B— to J—P— Esquire.

Dear John,

I Have consulted my friends in high life—
all advise a divorce, or wonder I am not
yet free—none defend the unfortunate lady
Sarah—her foibles, however justifiable, none
excuse.—They laugh at my irresolution,
and call me a fool—every one of them,
John, envies the opportunity I have to
get

get rid of a wife—“ would I were you ! would
 “ I were you, Sir C—— I how quickly I
 “ would be free from that plague of my life !”
 This is the answer most of those unfeeling un-
 happy wretches have given me. Nature has lost
 all her rights in their hearts——they take wives
 not to be happy, but great or profligate with
 impunity. Riches or power order the partners
 of their beds—inclination, temper, virtue, they
 never think of — yet they will complain if they
 are neither loved nor esteemed——extravagant
 pride ! they are men——so are those who with a
 cool mind meditate the ruin of their country——
 who, to satisfy their lust, fate a maid to infamy
 ——who never shed a tear over the miserable——
 they all are men —— thus, John, may they be
 called by the thoughtless, but you and I will
 not see in them the character of humanity.
 They are monsters formed by a bad education,
 and the base venal souls of their governors.
 They are not taught the reciprocal duties be-
 tween man and man, but their powers to violate
 them.—Affluence and flattery harden their souls
 ——they

—they are dead to pity.—Generosity is a stranger to their hearts—their faults are no faults—the most insignificant frailty in others is a crime.—They command happiness, and will procure none—no more of that proud, opulent, merciless mob of St. James; to thee, dear John, I can write my feelings—by thee I can be answered as a man.

Of pleasing lady Sarah I have no hopes—having unfeignedly declared her indifference she is now in my hands like an useless purse of gold, which, if bestowed on an indigent, would make him happy. Would you, dear John, keep that purse, when, of no service to you, it would end the misery, or prevent the death of a man?—I love lady Sarah — 'tis not a reason to enslave her — might I indulge every passion I would be a tyrant—the temptation would ever be followed with the desire to possess.—Lady Sarah is as free as I am — I have, dear John, unknown to her, enjoyed raptures in another's arms—will a murderer impeach a murderer?—I was a man, and made no defence—if I am innocent,

nay

may a man of honour in the eye of the polite world, how can lady Sarah be guilty?—a divorce would be unjust—I will not think of it.

is a crime.—They compared happiness, and

will procure none.—Adieu.

last, metrical mob of St James; to these, dear

can I can

be answered as a man to woman

Of pleasing lady Sarah I have no hopes—

your William's dear friend Captain F.

is now in my hands like an artist's palette of gold,

which, if bestowed on an indignant world, make

him happy. Would you, dear John, keep that

In the happy billiard of a young knightly li-

bering minister. I have commended my way

to lady Sarah's apartments—I—indicate your

curiosity, captain, for this minute Mrs B—

is covering me with the tears of a thousand

roses. I am the friend which calls for all her

devotion—the thought of any other duty she

has not—She plays—imitates—thus she prays

I hear her—never was my Godhead

dear to the wanton wishes of an handsome wo-

man—this paper is full of flowers—they are

LET.

man—this paper is full of flowers—they are

man—this paper is full of flowers—they are

man—this paper is full of flowers—they are

LETTER XLVI,

Lord WILLIAM G—— to Captain F——.

IN the happy disguise of a young sprightly libertine milliner, I have commended my way to lady Sarah's apartments.—I—moderate your curiosity, captain, for this minute Mrs. B—— is covering me with the leaves of a thousand roses. I am the shrine which calls for all her devotion—the thought of any other deity she has not.—She plays—smiles—thus she prays—I hear her—never was my godhead deaf to the wanton wishes of an handsome woman.—this paper is full of flowers—they are
in

in her bosom—an other handful flying at me—
I must—surely my gratitude to Mrs. B—— is
no infidelity or offence to Sarah—a kiss!—I
will return it.

Adieu.

LETTER XLVII.

The Countess P—— to Lady Sarah B——

LET. THE return of Captain P—— has received
the dying look of concern in my
lord's breast. The man, by peremptory re-
fusing his half saved transports, I had forced
to throw off the mask of false regard, and swore
an everlasting hatred against me. No more did
he plague me with his presence—no more mur-
dered understanding with his stupid attempts
at wit—no more expose my pride to a blush
by calling me his lady—I was absolutely happy
in this paper a full of flowers—

in her person—an other hand—
 I must—surely my grandmother Mrs. B—
 no indignity or offence to Sarah—
 will return to her position—
 after being coward, she shows her will—
 hidden in the dark recesses of her mind—
 for her noble spirit cannot be kept—
 in the dark—

LETTER XLVII.

The Countess P—— to Lady SARAH B——

THE return of captain F—— has revived the dying spark of concern in my lord's breast. The man, by peremptorily refusing his half starved transports, I had forced to throw off the mask of false regard, and swore an everlasting hatred against me. No more did he plague me with his presence—no more murder my understanding with his stupid attempts at wit—no more expose my pride to a blush by calling me his lady—I was absolutely happy

in

in his indifference and forgetfulness. Though a coxcomb, he believes it—that certainty has alarmed his self-love, and this whetted his passion of revenge. When that passion possesses the heart of a daring coward, the blows he will strike, hidden in the dark recesses of his dissembling soul, a noble spirit cannot suspect—at the very minute he smiles, a dagger may lay you lifeless at his feet. Such a fate I don't fear from lord P—, the boldness necessary to be a villain he has no more than the wit to be a rogue. Like children, intent on a half mischief, whom the sudden presence of their master frightens into silence and good nature, lord P—— would be as easily, by me, or any other person, looked or spoke into the sense of his insignificance and the care of his dear self.

Hear how the fellow talked, threatened, and keep from laughing, if possible.

Wearied of the topics of dress, cards, and politics, the eternal subjects of fools and knaves, I left lady B——'s rout at ten last night, and
came

came here to indulge in the privacy of my own thoughts. On entering my apartment I was whispered that lord P—— waited for me in my drawing room. The assurance of the man amazed, but did not trouble me. “I will exert his patience,” said I to my waiting woman, and I stepped to my closet. I put off the uneasy attire of vanity, and slipped on the dishabille of pleasure. Twice his lordship ventured to the door, twice he found it bolted, and received no answer. Insensible of his displeasure, I took *De Vergy's lettre contre la raison*, read half an hour, then sent to know what were his lordship's commands. The novelty of the message offended the man's self-importance—he was struck dumb—but anger warming his heart, he swore, and followed my woman. His supercilious looks of contempt I returned with an impertinent sneer.

“To keep me so long in waiting!—you use me exceedingly ill, Madam.—”

“Why

“ Why do you complain, when you was at
“ liberty to go ?——

For the first time, lord P—— felt my answer,
and coloured. He cursed, and gave me a name
my pen will not write. His scurrility I despised,
and with the energy of an avowed superiority,
asked the cause of his visit.

“ Tell it immediately, Sir ; I have no time
“ to trifle away.——

P——’s mean soul shrunk and yielded to the
stateliness of mine. His confusion I hated
more than his person—a man of no resolution is
the most contemptible in my eye.—I could not
help making him sensible of it. Then he faced
me for ten minutes, and explained, with an
astonishing firmness, his suspicions against me—
the violation of my duty he elucidated to the
entire conviction of my heart—that heart he
did not read——

“ You are my husband, my lord, but are
“ you a man ?——

This

This silenced him again. He would talk, shame tied his tongue. He thought proper to forget my question, and with the confidence of a beau——

“Your heart was undoubtedly another’s—or else you would have loved me.——

“Did you know yourself, my lord, you would not draw the foolish consequence. I may despise you and yet be free — no necessity is there for a new passion to enforce my dislike of you.——

The more true what I said, the higher his indignation arose—it knew no bounds, and I was stormed with a torrent of abuse. He talked of a divorce; I laughed and defied him. Growing at last impatient of his impertinences, I took him by the shoulder and made him whirl about towards the door—he resisted—I threatened him with my fan—in his trouble he probably mistook it for a pistol—he shrieked, and away he ran.



Had

Had I not worn the name of P——, such a scene would have amused me—but a fool in my husband!—I was heartily vexed and out of humour.—Were the public convinced I was sacrificed to the ambition of my parents, who, to strengthen themselves with the interest of this powerful family, overlooked my happiness, and left me no other choice than to obey, I would be insensible of an evil I have not brought upon me—but who will charge parents with such inhumanity? Nature rises against the thought—thousand instances are not proofs for good men—no discouragement to the bad—the victim though innocent is hardly pitied.



When I hear a virtuous woman praised, I always esteem her husband—from him proceeds the reputation she enjoys. Did his bad qualities overbalance the good, less honest and deserving would his wife be.

Soldiers, commanded by a humane, skilful general, do their duty with alacrity, and desert not—led by an haughty, ungenerous man, they drop their arms in battle, forget their oath,
and

and fly to their more bountiful enemy — thus is woman a friend or a betrayer.

When the spirit of contradiction prevails in male or female characters, what but love can soothe the provoking temper into moderation? What husband will suffer the indiscreet assertions of his wife — what wife those of her husband, if they are both rich and indifferent? — Unless a powerful interest dictates our behaviour, none will submit — who will obey when he can command? Not I.

Adieu.

N — H —.

P. S. A letter * from thee — I hate thee, Sarah, for not having sent for me: of all things I would have liked to see lord William G — in the dress of a milliner. “He looked so gay, so coquettish, so much like the character he acted, that you are almost afraid his heart par- took of it.” — A young man, Sarah, assumes naturally that spirit — if passion forces another upon

* That letter was not in the pocket-book.

O

him,

him, as it is not his own, it is but momentary.
 Scold not, dear Sarah ; the man who loves thee
 cannot have the levity of youth.—Thy hopes of
 being soon free I welcome. Escape, love, and
 be happy.

LET.

LETTER XLVIII.

Lord WILLIAM G—— to Captain F——.

INDULGE the pride or passion of a woman, and she shall be your's. Her character is then at your disposal: you may modify it at pleasure. Your manners she will imitate, your morals applaud, your opinions adopt. What she fancied before a supreme bliss, will change into an exquisite evil — virtue or vice she will alternately sacrifice to your whims.——A handsome man does sometimes fail when an ugly fellow succeeds—why that? The former talks to the senses, this to the heart—his triumph is less

rapid, but much more flattering and durable—the impressions he gives, like inscriptions upon brass, are everlasting ——— know women, and always to you they will say Yes.



So resolved on depriving me of the sight of lady Sarah were the prudent dames D—— and B——, that for two days my prayers were thrown away, as those of the papists upon their wooden saints. One word only they returned to my most earnest entreaties; and that word was the inexorable NO.

To complain, bribe, or threaten, would have availed me nothing. As both loved and pitied lady Sarah, ordinary methods were not likely to succeed.

“I am too proud,” said I to Mrs. D——, “to beg again what lady Sarah will not grant —her indifference is evident in her constant denial—her * letters declare a dying passion—

* These letters I could not read. Had the author favoured me with the interview I publicly begged of him, they would have been printed.—Very likely they will be so, when I have learned to read them.

“she

“ she loves me no more——though my heart
“ bleeds at her inconstancy, I am a man——

And taking no notice of her amazement, I
resumed with the voice of resolution——

“ I am a man, and will be free.——

“ What a language ? Are you mad, my lord ?
“ —You will be free !” is it thus you repay lady
“ Sarah’s sincere passion for you ?——“You will be
“ free !” far from your thoughts is the odious
“ wish——tell me that death only can make you
“ free, and I will believe——

“ She hates me, Mrs. D——

“ Good God ! how you talk ! lady Sarah
“ hates you !——Is an excess of love the proof of
“ hatred ?——Ungenerous lord !——poor lady Sa-
“ rah !——

And her eyes were instantly bedewed with
tears. I minded not her tears.

“ As you are not a lover, Mrs. D——, you
“ cannot be my judge. I see reality where even
“ pro-

“probability does not strike you——had you
“my heart, my indignation would be yours.—

And I assumed the careless countenance of a fop. Surprise froze Mrs. D——’s tongue. She looked at me —— I was before a pier-glass playing with a lock of my hair, and admiring the freshness of my teeth. My ridiculous behaviour affected her sensibly —— no longer did she question my indifference —— she was utterly convinced I loved not lady Sarah.

“You was ever false, my lord ; with the ingenu-
“genuity of youth you concealed a perfidious
“heart——pleasure, not lady Sarah you adored.—
“How unfortunate lady Sarah !——how dissem-
“bling man !——

The reproach pierced my soul——though from Mrs. D—— I felt it.

“Never was I false, Madam——

“Are not you so this instant ?——I will not
“upbraid you with a few caprices, although ex-
“tremely indelicate in the lover of lady Sarah
“——the senses have wants love or reason cannot
“always

“ always oppose—but how can I excuse your opi-
 “ nion of lady Sarah, and the resolution you have
 “ made? Is it generous to charge your mistress
 “ with inconstancy, when in your favour she for-
 “ gets her honour, forsakes her family, despises
 “ all that should be dear and sacred to a woman
 “ of her sensibility? This very minute she stu-
 “ dies the means to make you happy—she
 “ smiles on the husband she intends to betray—
 “ an enemy to deceit, what must she not suffer!
 “ —Yet you are insensible of it!—O! lord Wil-
 “ liam, my heart is in agony for lady Sarah.—
 “ From you she did not expect a dagger——

This last expression was nigh putting me off
 my guard—I was moved, and could not dissem-
 ble it. How eloquent woman when her heart
 dictates!—the feelings of a woman of pleasure
 are an honour to nature—her heart is open
 to every virtue—in her vice is an incident, and
 not a character.

Fearing that lady Sarah would not undistract-
 ed hear the murdering tale, should it be related
 to her, I assured Mrs. D——, that only a full
 conviction

conviction of lady Sarah's indifference should make me a votary to another beauty.

"That conviction you never shall have—she is too true, too loving, and you too amiable—to you her heart is fated for life—you could question her tenderness!—She has not your heart, my lord—she would scorn to suspect you.——"

"She might see me—she does not: 'tis a crime to my eye—I cannot forgive.——Her passion is not real, or she would see me.——"

"She will not lose you——"

"That fear true love would brave—she loves me not.——"

"Reflect on the dangers——"

"I see none.—Since Sarah thinks of them, I am hated.——"

"Our plot is almost ready for execution—your impatience may discover it—wait a few days——"

"A day

“ A day without Sarah is an irreparable loss
 “ in my life.—Prudence, Madam, is too irreso-
 “ lute—its decision a lover cannot expect—my
 “ temerity will be happier—let Sarah love, trust
 “ to me, and this very evening she shall be free.—

“ She will not consent——

“ No more, Madam ; that word confirms her
 “ indifference, and my resolution.——

“ My lord !——

I would not hear ; and with all the features
 of anger and indignation threw myself into my
 closet.

“ What an obstinate animal is a lover ! How
 “ blind ! how foolish !—I must comply with his
 “ fancy, but direct it, else his rashness will hasten
 “ their ruin.

After this soliloquy, of which my ear did not
 lose one word, Mrs. D—— left the dining-room.

Thus with art, captain, I forced Mrs. D——
 to serve me. Her attachment to lady Sarah
 realized almost her doubts of me.—She did not
 know but I might be unfaithful—wearied of an
 unfortunate

unfortunate passion—then the natural fickleness of youth, which ever puts a word or two when obstacles prevent our enjoyments—this Mrs. D— was too sensible not to consider and apprehend —she obeyed her fears, and went to lady Sarah.

She had not been gone twenty minutes before Mrs. B— appeared.—Sleep seizes on my senses, my eyes say I must not write.

Adieu.

Old Bond-street.

One in the morning.

LET-

LETTER XLIX.

Lord WILLIAM G——. *In Continuation, &c.*

MRS. B—— came from lady Sarah to reason me into patience and discretion.— As well might she have attempted to wash white a native of Negroeland, or make a generous man of the D— of B——. Faithful to the charge given her, she spoke—spoke—but spoke only—she convinced me not. To her I did not say, “lady Sarah hates me,” but “I love and will see her.” The heart of Mrs. B—— I had taught to feel strongly — from her own sensations she knew the impetuosity of mine — like me
she

she had been passionate and thoughtless—like me forgot her duty—nay, repented not.

Her fear for my safety, not for lady Sarah's, gave a life to her eloquence—she painted the dangers with their own colours—I saw every obstacle as it was.—Sir C— perpetually in the house—lady H—— perpetually inquisitive and anxious — the particulars of each impediment were a new fuel to my desires—surrounded with life and death, lady Sarah had the value of the famous golden fleece—she was worthy of all my ambition, love, and courage.

“ I love,” exclaimed I—“ I will see and carry off the lovely prey.——

“ If you do, I shall see you no more.——

I thought it just, captain, to deceive Mrs. B——. A No at this instant would have made her miserable—my past pleasures with her forced a Yes from me —— I could not vex the woman who had made me happy.

“ You

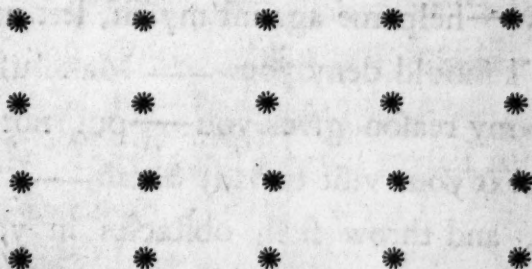
" You will see me, dear B——. Never shall
 " your generosity be paid with ingratitude——
 " excuse a passion I cannot conquer.——

Mrs. B—— sighed, looked loving—— but
 thought of Sarah, and did herself justice.

" I cannot complain — I yielded — you pro-
 " mised nothing—alas !——

And she leaned against my bosom.

" My own self," resumed she with tears in
 her eyes, " I must and will disregard—will dis-
 " regard !—too unnatural is the sacrifice—"



Mrs. B——'s affection for me prevailed at
 last over the love of her own self——she ge-

* I have been obliged to leave out two pages, which
 were written with such a character as the author only could
 decipher.

nerously

nerously forgot the woman to act the lover —
my happiness became her sole concern.

“ When you are happy—I shall be less mis-
“ rable——

I kissed her hand.

“ Do not show your gratitude, or I shall be
“ weak again—look not—talk not—kiss not
“ this hand—your touch—your expressions will
“ make me ungenerous—I will think but of
“ myself—be sensible but of my loss—for
“ your own sake, my lord, awake not the woman
“ in me—let me not remember the past rap-
“ tures—help me against myself, lest my assist-
“ ance I should deny you. — Make use of the
“ hour my reason gives you—put not off to
“ the next your visit to lady Sarah—I may re-
“ pent, and throw such obstacles in your way
“ as to destroy the hope of ever seeing her—I
“ love, mistrust me—generosity my heart tells
“ is a folly—I may believe my heart——

“ Were not my soul totally lady Sarah’s, it
“ would be Mrs. B—’s. No other woman
“ could

“ could talk me so charmingly into transports
 “ — I ———

I feared myself, captain; my heart, though full of lady Sarah, my senses would have easily silenced—desire began to enliven them — I felt the danger, and left the room abruptly *.

* * * * *

Soon a few thoughts on lady Sarah strengthened me against the charms of Mrs. B——. No longer did I excuse my inconstancy—I reflected on it with horror—I would have blushed, repented for the past, had not the lovely woman entered my closet. However sensible of my perfidy, Mrs. B——’s smiles told me I was innocent—she looked, and I hated myself for the remorse I had felt.

“ Lady Sarah I love, dear B——, my senses
 “ may be unfaithful — my heart cannot — this

* I wish lord William had *felt the danger* when he first saw her —— his wanderings, though justifiable, I do not like to relate —— indeed I do not —— but as publisher I must be true to my author——’tis a duty I will not violate.

“ would

“ would be the only present worthy of you—to
 “ give it is not in my power—excuse my since-
 “ rity—pity lady Sarah—let not a passion I
 “ cannot repay extinguish your generosity—

Mrs. B—turned her head from me to spare
 my sensibility the sight of a tear.

“ ’Tis resolved——it shall be done,” cried
 she, after a few minutes reverie.

“ Let us, my lord, drop for ever the subject
 “ of love——its name is torment to my heart
 “ ——no longer do I oppose your happiness——
 “ I will secure it at the expence of my own
 “ peace——thank me not.——Your youth fa-
 “ vours a design I have formed to bring you
 “ with safety to lady Sarah. The more ridicu-
 “ lous the less it will be suspected. You must
 “ put on the garb of Mrs. D——’s appren-
 “ tice——

“ What !——

She closed my lips with her hand.

“ My fancy must be law——this very minute
 “ I will see you metamorphosed into a Miss
 “ Fanny.



LOVERS

LETTERS

T

“ Fanny. Come, stare not, the work should be
“ as quickly completed as thought of. —

Then she rang, called for a smart dress, and with her own hands in half an hour gave me the appearance of a lively girl. What passed in that half hour 'tis needless to write, as the situation we were in does easily betray it.

So perfectly did I look the woman, that on being presented to Mrs. D——, when she came into the room, she really took me for what I seemed to be. I talked, walked, fanned myself, yet was not known. Mrs. B——'s gravity supported my part to deception. “ I was her
“ niece,” thus she had announced me——“ just
“ come to town, and in need of a place at a
“ mantua-maker's.”——

The decency of her carriage pleases me, said Mrs. D——.

And she whispered Mrs. B——

“ Is she a virgin ?——

“ She is.——

P

Her

Her eyes brightened with joy.

“ Will you stay with me, Miss? ——— ”

I courtesied, and answered, I would think myself extremely happy. ———

She saluted me. I bit her lips.

“ What! is this, Miss, the country way to return a salute? — My lips bleed ——— ”

I burst into a laughter.

“ How! my virgin vanished into lord William! ——— ”

Two words explained what we had resolved.

“ Good God! What an alteration in your features that dress has made! None can know you — step, Mrs. B ———, to lady Sarah — tell her, her fears must subside — in the dusk of the evening she will see lord William — I’ll be with him. If opportunity offers, she shall not sleep this night at H ——— h ———. In the mean time his lordship and I will order the flight so well as to baffle the enemy’s pursuit. ——— ”

* * * * *

After having taken all the precautions which prudence could suggest to favour our escape, if fortune put it in our power, Mrs. B—— and I tripped to H—— h——.

“Not so fast—not so fast, Juliet,” often said Mrs. B—— as we went along. My heart gave its impatience to my feet; I ran rather than walked. She whispered the word *discretion*—I heard, and obeyed.

We knocked; the door flew open. The porter observed me from head to foot—my countenance spoke a maid.

“Charming wench, faith!——

And into his lodge he went.

As we crossed the yard, Sir C—— was upon the steps ready to get into his chair.

“Fear not,” said I to my terrified companion; and as I passed, courtesied very low to Sir C——; he bowed, and looked complaisant to Mrs. D——.

"That's a fine girl—excellent shape on my
"honour.——"

This compliment he trusted to Mrs. B——'s
ear—then smiled on me—bowed again, and left
us.

In going up the stairs we met Mr. F——.
A pretty woman will always stop Mr. F——.
At her sight ever will he stare, desire, and be
free.

My charms attracted his attention—he gazed
—and then with a half praise upon my mo-
desty——

"Is this, Mrs. D——, a devotee to plea-
"sure?——"

"What! so young, Sir? She is hardly six-
"teen.——"

"Really?"

And the man attempted my lips.

"Fy! Sir—for shame!——"

I struggled, and got free.

Mr. F—— was not so easily to be deprived
of a kiss: he begged pardon, and as instantly
offended

offended by forcing one from my lips. I know not how far the fellow would have carried his impertinence, had not Mrs. D——, by pulling him from me, I by a hearty blow on his face, and Mrs. B—— by appearing suddenly at the top of the stairs, extinguished the fiery flame of his amorous soul. He flew from us in a rage, holding his handkerchief up to his nose to receive the dropping blood.

Our entry into lady Sarah's room was accompanied by a loud laughter none of us could suppress— It gave way to a scene my heart can feel, my pen cannot describe.

“ Sarah——Sarah !—

“ William—dear William !—

Paint to thyself the charm, the expression of these words told again and again in one another's arms. For one hour a delirious joy com-

commanded our sensibility——we could but
say——

“ Sarah——Sarah !

“ William——dear William !——

What a difference, captain, between the
wants of the senses, and the longings of the
heart ! With Fanny and Mrs. B——, desire,
once satisfied, expired away — with my Sarah
it outlives, and creates new raptures. — Her
touch——Mrs. B—— !

“ Sir C——’s favourite running horse has got a
cold——an express he received an hour
ago——on the news he set off immediately
for Norfolk. Lady H——d is gone to
Kensington —— but a few servants in the
house —— these easily to be bribed, or
knocked down, as necessity shall require——
lady Sarah thinks this evening the only time
favour-

favourable to our wishes"—keep at the Tilt-yard,
 F——, that I may find thee if in need of thy
 help—I must prepare against every possible
 chance in my disfavour.

Adieu.

Old Bond-street.

LET-

L E T T E R L.

The Countess P— to Captain F—.

YOU heard yesterday the panegyric of lord P—. It was spoke by an officer—a man of honour and judgment—I am glad, captain, he has a friend bold enough to lie in his favour—the character, well supported, may set him off in the world as somebody.—Merit I never knew in his lordship—perhaps he has some which he conceals from me, and displays to his intimate — if this is the case, am I wrong to say he has none? What are virtues to me
which

which contribute not to my happiness?—I know only for certain, that he is my husband, I am young, and love you.

Adieu.

J. P——.

N——H——

LETTER II.

LETTER II.

The Countess P—— to Captain F——

Captain F—— to the Countess P——

YOU heard yesterday the paragon of lord
P——. It was spoke by an officer—a man

of honour and indignity—I am glad, cap-

tain, he has a friend bold enough to lie in his

mouth at one—I saw him out of my

favour—the character well supported, may

I love only could ignore my sister with

let him off to the world as somebody.—Merrill

LETTER II.

some which he conceals from me, and displays

to his intimate might if this is the case, and I will

relax perhaps some? What are you doing in

the presence of witnesses, the witnesses lived
high like below stairs, and with all the
the porter, and forgetful of their duty.
That man was the sole obstacle—should it not
be removed, an escape was impossible.

It entered my head to personate a footman,
and get the door to absolutely break as to take
it out of his power to trouble our lovers. We a-

greeted I should think the lady
Sarah—that he would wait near the door, and

his trusty servant, with a post-chaise and four,
Captain F—— to the Countess P——.

of an orange thrown over the wall, he would
give a gentle rap—then I was to act the porter
myself, and let lady Sarah and
preliminaries settled, we drank to them, to Sarah,

LORD William and lady Sarah eloped this
morning at one—I saw them out of H——
h——. Love only could inspire lady Sarah with
such a resolution ; not the least scruple did she
feel, not the least fear did she betray.

At ten at night I was sent for by lord Wil-
liam. Mrs. B—— had informed him that, in
the

the absence of their masters, the servants lived high life below stairs, and were all, except the porter, rioting, and forgetful of their duty. That man was the sole obstacle—should it not be removed, an escape was impossible.

It entered my head to personate a footman, and get the porter so absolutely drunk as to take it out of his power to trouble our lovers. We agreed I should call for Mrs. B——, and see lady Sarah—that he would wait near the door, and his trusty servant, with a post-chaise and four, near St. James's church—that upon the signal of an orange thrown over the wall, he would give a gentle rap—then I was to act the porter myself, and set lady Sarah at liberty. These preliminaries settled, we drank to thee, to Sarah, to pleasure, and parted.

When I had gratified the curiosity of the porter, and very humbly answered his impertinent “What d’ye want?” I was admitted to Mrs. B——. If I excuse lord William’s infidelity,
Jenny,

Jenny, impeach not my delicacy — I upbraided him myself with a want of it—I was unjust, and too hasty—had I seen Mrs. B—— I would not have thought of accusing him.

Two lines from lord William told her my name, and our friendship.—She looked for her foible in my eyes—they said nothing of it—a blush which had glanced on her face, gave way to a smile.

“ May, from this night, the happiness of lady Sarah and lord William begin, and never cease !——

“ Your wish is mine, Madam, — with you I join in the same prayer : May they for ever be happy !——

Then I explained to her how I intended to act.

“ Did I chuse to fight our way out, this instant we could go. The porter only is between the street and lady Sarah ; that enemy should be easily conquered. But the least noise might alarm, and make you suspected—

“ Mrs.

"Mrs. B—— must be free from blame. — I'll
 "step into the lodge, and under the feigned want
 "of a place coax the fellow into friendship. A
 "bottle and adulation will procure me his inter-
 "est and confidence. Between twelve and one
 "let lady Sarah come down, and when near the
 "wall, throw this orange over it. Trust the
 "rest to me; I answer for the success."

Thinking it imprudent to see lady Sarah, I
 left Mrs. B——, and went to the lodge. The
 madness of talking was the particular disease of
 honest John. No sooner had I told my want,
 that I gained his favour—on such a subject he
 could have spoke for ten nights. Every noble
 family he was acquainted with. "This was a
 "good, that a bad master. This lady wanted a
 "fine fellow, and that a discreet one."

"A rich fop, Peter, is the best man for a lad
 "of your ingenuity. Upon his vanity you may
 "lay a perpetual contribution—the follies
 "of the masters are the vails of the servants.
 "What d'ye think of such a place?—"

"The

"The best for me, as you said, Mr. John.
"I wish you would remember me when such a
"one comes in your way.——

"I may now recommend you to twenty of
"that kind——

Then he named me half the court. A
cough stopping the tide of his impertinence, I
advised him to refresh his spirits with a glass of
Mountain, and begged he would accept it from
me.

"Not I indeed, Peter.——It shan't be said
"of honest John he suffered any body to pay
"in his lodge—at our master's table the guests
"fit for their money—that hospitality we know
"not in Wales.——

He took a bottle from under a table.

"To this you are welcome, Peter—were you
"not, I wou'dn't offer it.——

And he filled two glasses.

'Tis

'Tis very odd, Mr. John, they should invite people they do not like.——

“ In this I think myself happier than my
“ lord——vanity, Peter, gives not the plea-
“ sure which the conversation of the man we
“ love or esteem procures. Besides, that vanity
“ must be poor indeed which blushes not at the
“ sight of a guest emptying his pocket in the
“ antichamber for a dinner of which he was de-
“ fired to partake.——

“ Many forbid us to receive——

“ They are true Englishmen, Peter.——Their
“ health.——

I pledged him.

“ Why are the great less generous than the
“ squire they affect to despise?——

“ They keep that custom, as they support
“ Almack's and Cornelys's assemblies, to force
“ the honest men from their company——

“ You

“ You are very severe, Mr. John.—

“ Not I, Peter. I am but true—

I applauded John in whatever he said. My complaisance worked him into so good a humour, that a second bottle succeeded to the first. His head being proof against the repeated attacks of full bumpers, I dexterously threw a soporific powder into his glass. He drank it, and his tongue began to stammer. He yawned, and as instantly fell asleep. Then I ventured my head out of the lodge-door, heard, and saw nothing. A few minutes after I discovered lady Sarah; she was alone. Fearful to cause a panic terror, I remained where I was. She turned her head; then, with the unheard swiftness of love hastened to the gate.

“ Keep your orange, my lady.—

She pressed my hand, and into the street we went. Lord William knew us.

“ This

" This is no time for transports or gratitude
 " —quick to your chaise,—

They leaped into it, and away they rode.

Adieu.

Tilt-yard.

THE TILT-YARD.

I Considered every consequence of my elopement with Lord William, and despised them all. The wretch has a right to and his military by a voluntary death—no more than he could I. The hour of happiness forbid.

Q

LET-

the thought of suicide—that only changed the poison into a light.—With the love of my William,

LETTER LII.

Lady Sarah B—— to the Countess P——.

I Considered every consequence of my elopement with lord William, and despised them all. The wretch has a right to end his misery by a voluntary death—no more than he could I suffer and live. The hope of happiness forbid the thought of suicide—that only changed the poison into a flight.—With the love of my William,

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liam, and the esteem of my Jenny, I am happy,
and laugh at the scorn and hatred of all the
world.

Adieu.

Bugden, in my way to G—— Castle.

THE E N D.



hand, and the
and laugh at the
world.

Adieu.

Brighton, in my way to C — Castle.

LETTER III.

My dear Sir,

100/101
The E. N. D.